

Magistrates' Court Bulletin

October to December 2010

serving the community through the administration of justice

Document Details

Provisional Figures

Date issued: 11 February 2011

Document Authors: Statistics & Research

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Summary

During October – December 2010:

There were 1,155 scheduled magistrates' sittings of which:

Criminal	768
Youth	135
Family	252

There were 69 additional magistrates' sittings of which:

Criminal	64
Youth	3
Family	2

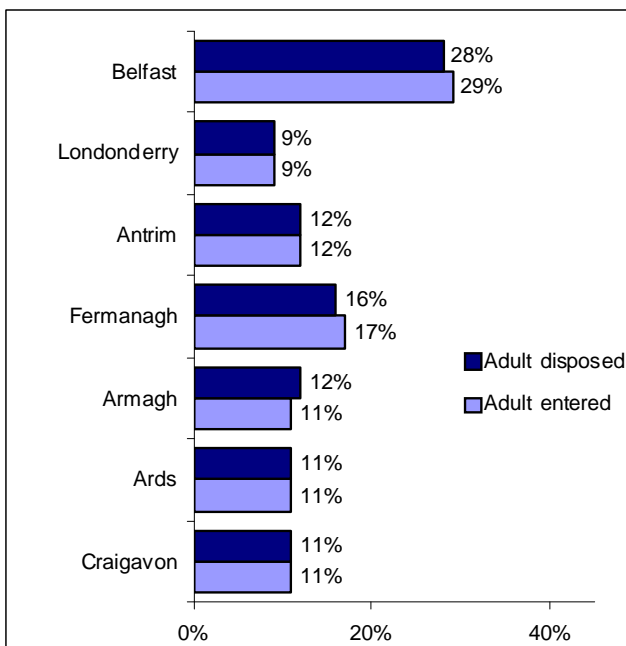
There were 58 special magistrates' sittings of which:

Criminal	58
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13,560 new adult criminal defendants were received in court and 13,502 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 7 weeks. (Figure 2)

803 new defendants were entered in the youth court and 972 youth defendants were disposed of in the youth court.

The average waiting time in the youth court from first hearing to disposal was 11 weeks.

1,450 new civil applications were entered and 1,332 civil applications were disposed of.

The average length of time for a case to progress through the civil court was 8 weeks from date of issue to disposal.

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

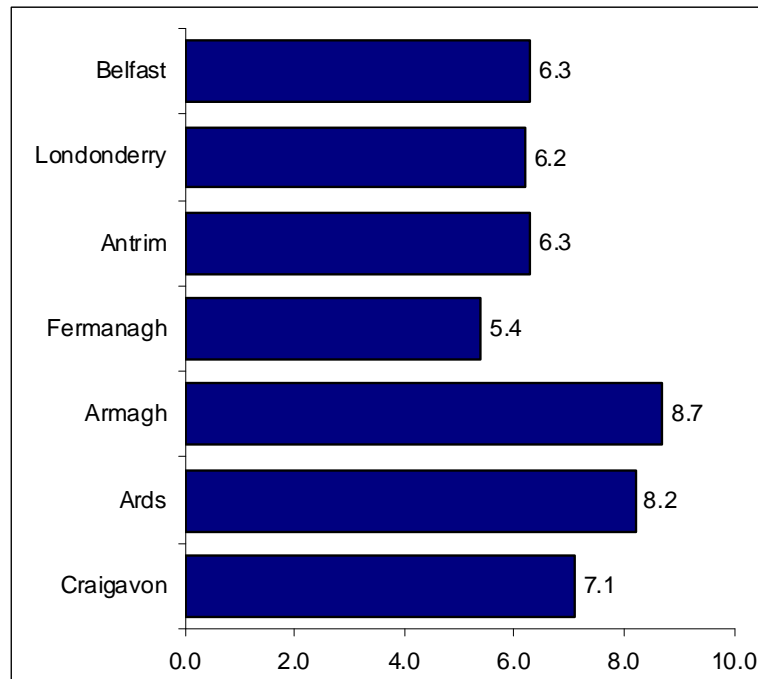


Table 1.1: Scheduled court sitting days & average court sitting times in the magistrates' courts by division & venue

		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	241	03:46:52	39	04:20:32	68	03:09:22
	Total	241	03:46:52	39	04:20:32	68	03:09:22
Londonderry	Limavady	13	04:23:50		.		.
	Magherafelt	14	03:17:51	5	02:17:00	1	01:10:00
	Londonderry	53	03:52:10	9	04:00:00	22	04:18:51
	Total	80	03:51:18	14	03:23:12	23	04:10:39
Antrim	Antrim	19	04:21:34	5	02:47:00	6	04:35:00
	Larne	13	03:07:41	3	01:56:40	6	02:38:20
	Coleraine	43	04:26:30	5	04:04:00	13	04:03:27
	Ballymena @ Antrim	23	04:03:41	6	01:49:10	16	03:15:11
	Total	98	04:09:44	19	02:41:03	41	03:36:46
Fermanagh & Tyrone	Dungannon	42	04:28:41	6	03:50:50	10	04:42:30
	Strabane	22	03:24:46	3	02:06:40		.
	Omagh	30	04:17:50	6	01:25:50	11	04:28:00
	Enniskillen	25	05:47:12	6	03:17:30	3	03:10:00
	Total	119	04:30:37	21	02:45:00	24	04:24:17
Armagh & South Down	Armagh	20	04:20:30	4	03:57:30	1	02:00:00
	Banbridge @Newry	15	04:19:20	2	04:15:00	2	02:40:00
	Newry	35	04:06:19	6	01:56:40	18	03:40:16
	Total	70	04:13:09	12	03:00:00	21	03:29:45
Ards	Bangor	24	03:57:55		.	2	02:25:00
	Downpatrick	23	04:37:57	7	03:52:51	3	02:26:40
	Newtownards	47	02:27:39	12	02:08:45	41	02:11:42
	Total	94	03:22:35	19	02:47:06	46	02:13:15
Craigavon	Lisburn	34	04:13:31	6	03:09:10	14	04:54:17
	Craigavon	32	03:56:48	5	02:34:00	15	02:46:20
	Total	66	04:05:25	11	02:53:10	29	03:48:06

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	768	03:58:03	135	03:18:18	252	03:22:28

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	03:30:00
	Total		.		.	1	03:30:00
Londonderry	Londonderry	1	00:20:00		.	1	00:20:00
	Total	1	00:20:00		.	1	00:20:00
Antrim	Antrim	3	01:48:20		.		.
	Coleraine	5	05:39:00		.		.
	Total	8	04:12:30		.		.
Fermanagh & Tyrone	Dungannon	7	03:05:42		.		.
	Omagh	2	02:22:30		.		.
	Enniskillen	5	02:07:00		.		.
	Total	14	02:38:34		.		.
Armagh & South Down	Armagh	6	03:20:50		.		.
	Banbridge @ Newry	1	02:00:00		.		.
	Newry	8	02:40:37		.		.
	Total	15	02:54:00		.		.
Ards	Bangor	1	06:15:00		.		.
	Downpatrick	9	04:00:33	1	00:10:00		.
	Newtownards	5	03:20:00	1	01:15:00		.
	Total	15	03:56:00	2	00:42:30		.
Craigavon	Lisburn	4	03:46:15		.		.
	Craigavon	7	03:10:42	1	03:34:00		.
	Total	11	03:23:38	1	03:34:00		.

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	64	03:17:39	3	01:39:40	2	01:55:00

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.

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	10	00:34:06
	Total	10	00:34:06
Antrim	Antrim	6	00:50:50
	Ballymena@ Antrim	2	00:17:30
	Total	8	00:42:30
Fermanagh & Tyrone	Omagh	11	01:04:05
	Total	11	01:04:05
Armagh & South Down	Newry	9	00:39:26
	Total	9	00:39:26
Ards	Newtownards	12	00:30:50
	Total	12	00:30:50
Craigavon	Lisburn	8	00:31:52
	Total	8	00:31:52

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	58	00:40:47

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	2926	959	112	3997
	Division total	2926	959	112	3997
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	543	196	24	763
	Limavady Court Office	201	52	3	256
	Magherafelt Court Office	209	50	7	266
	Division total	953	298	34	1285
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	605	88	20	713
	Coleraine Court Office	467	198	30	695
	Ballymena Court Office	12	39	23	74
	Larne Court Office	88	58	8	154
	Division total	1172	383	81	1636
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	367	133	46	546
	Strabane Court Office	206	71	9	286
	Enniskillen Court Office	477	96	15	588
	Dungannon Court Office	614	190	38	842
	Division total	1664	490	108	2262
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	246	103	23	372
	Banbridge Court Office	227	61	8	296
	Newry Court Office	627	162	15	804
	Division total	1100	326	46	1472
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	494	113	36	643
	Downpatrick Court Office	319	88	21	428
	Bangor Court Office	272	96	9	377
	Division total	1085	297	66	1448
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	544	151	8	703
	Lisburn Court Office	483	214	60	757
	Division total	1027	365	68	1460

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

	PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Fixed penalty	Total
Northern Ireland	9927	3118	515	13560

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	2832	879	113	3824
	Division total	2832	879	113	3824
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	568	167	25	760
	Limavady Court Office	194	54	3	251
	Magherafelt Court Office	214	46	5	265
	Division total	976	267	33	1276
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	547	89	21	657
	Coleraine Court Office	429	187	29	645
	Ballymena Court Office	93	39	23	155
	Larne Court Office	90	57	8	155
	Division total	1159	372	81	1612
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	398	127	43	568
	Strabane Court Office	165	107	9	281
	Enniskillen Court Office	444	91	15	550
	Dungannon Court Office	609	181	38	828
	Division total	1616	506	105	2227
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	246	101	23	370
	Banbridge Court Office	252	76	9	337
	Newry Court Office	691	171	14	876
	Division total	1189	348	46	1583
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	478	107	36	621
	Downpatrick Court Office	412	76	21	509
	Bangor Court Office	297	94	8	399
	Division total	1187	277	65	1529
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	588	141	5	734
	Lisburn Court Office	466	194	57	717
	Division total	1054	335	62	1451

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	10013	2984	505	13502

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	5.62	5.66	.66	6.33
	Total	5.62	5.66	.66	6.33
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	4.82	5.47	.78	6.26
	Limavady Court Office	4.51	5.01	.40	5.41
	Magherafelt Court Office	6.07	6.00	.60	6.61
	Total	5.01	5.49	.67	6.16
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	4.65	4.88	.63	5.51
	Coleraine Court Office	5.52	6.22	.55	6.77
	Ballymena Court Office	9.05	9.28	.72	10.00
	Larne Court Office	5.25	3.62	.44	4.06
	Total	5.43	5.67	.59	6.26
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	5.66	5.33	.71	6.04
	Strabane Court Office	4.80	4.01	.43	4.44
	Enniskillen Court Office	8.46	3.66	.52	4.19
	Dungannon Court Office	5.88	5.27	.89	6.16
	Total	6.31	4.73	.70	5.43
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	5.08	6.65	.36	7.00
	Banbridge Court Office	4.12	9.05	.63	9.68
	Newry Court Office	8.69	8.83	.27	9.10
	Total	6.89	8.38	.37	8.74
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	6.76	5.67	.45	6.12
	Downpatrick Court Office	6.50	9.95	.68	10.63
	Bangor Court Office	6.57	7.24	1.04	8.27
	Total	6.62	7.50	.68	8.18
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	5.56	5.51	.66	6.17
	Lisburn Court Office	6.98	6.89	1.06	7.95
	Total	6.26	6.19	.86	7.05

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	5.99	6.08	.65	6.73

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	989	15		1004
All Sexual Offences	231			231
All Burglary Offences	143			143
All Robbery Offences	38			38
All Theft Offences	579			579
All Fraud and Forgery Offences	135	139		274
All Criminal Damage Offences	254			254
All Offences Against the State	25			25
All Other Offences	740	336		1076
All Drug Offences	336			336
All Motoring Offences	4222	540		4762
All Non-Police Offences	42	1837	505	2384
All Breach	141	52		193
Combination of charges	2138	65		2203
Total	10013	2984	505	13502

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	520			520
Plea of guilty on all charges	4376	685		5061
All charges withdrawn	1930	922	7	2859
Fixed penalty default			498	498
Plea not guilty - found guilty on at least one charge	2769	1310		4079
Plea not guilty - acquitted on all charges	418	67		485
Total	10013	2984	505	13502

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

		PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Total
Belfast	Laganside Courts	274	3	277
	Division total	274	3	277
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	56		56
	Limavady Court Office	6		6
	Magherafelt Court Office	13		13
	Division total	75		75
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	62	2	64
	Coleraine Court Office	38		38
	Ballymena Court Office	2		2
	Larne Court Office	9		9
	Division total	111	2	113
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	12		12
	Strabane Court Office	9		9
	Enniskillen Court Office	25		25
	Dungannon Court Office	49		49
	Division total	95		95
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	11		11
	Banbridge Court Office	8		8
	Newry Court Office	40		40
	Division total	59		59
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	57		57
	Downpatrick Court Office	35	1	36
	Bangor Court Office	24		24
	Division total	116	1	117
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	29	2	31
	Lisburn Court Office	36		36
	Division total	65	2	67

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

	PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Total
Northern Ireland	795	8	803

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

		PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Total
Belfast	Laganside Courts	369	1	370
	Division total	369	1	370
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	78		78
	Limavady Court Office	6		6
	Magherafelt Court Office	12		12
	Division total	96		96
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	66	1	67
	Coleraine Court Office	42	1	43
	Ballymena Court Office	6	1	7
	Larne Court Office	6		6
	Division total	120	3	123
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	19		19
	Strabane Court Office	10		10
	Enniskillen Court Office	35		35
	Dungannon Court Office	45		45
	Division total	109		109
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	16		16
	Banbridge Court Office	7		7
	Newry Court Office	29		29
	Division total	52		52
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	60		60
	Downpatrick Court Office	44	1	45
	Bangor Court Office	34		34
	Division total	138	1	139
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	45	1	46
	Lisburn Court Office	37		37
	Division total	82	1	83

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

	PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Total
Northern Ireland	966	6	972

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	3.84	5.73	4.06
	Total	3.84	5.73	4.06
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	2.45	5.81	2.77
	Limavady Court Office	6.86	1.96	3.21
	Magherafelt Court Office	4.65	8.22	5.19
	Total	2.98	5.90	3.10
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	2.67	3.93	2.96
	Coleraine Court Office	4.99	14.45	3.13
	Ballymena Court Office	2.63	13.74	12.51
	Larne Court Office	7.50	2.00	9.00
	Total	3.59	8.15	3.90
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	3.48	9.34	.77
	Strabane Court Office	4.29	3.30	3.11
	Enniskillen Court Office	5.53	6.55	1.59
	Dungannon Court Office	4.95	6.41	3.57
	Total	4.80	6.65	2.38
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	3.77	9.50	4.38
	Banbridge Court Office	5.61	7.71	1.86
	Newry Court Office	5.29	5.77	2.12
	Total	4.88	7.17	2.75
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	4.86	7.77	3.83
	Downpatrick Court Office	5.30	15.17	4.36
	Bangor Court Office	4.63	7.84	3.37
	Total	4.99	10.77	3.95
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	4.71	5.38	4.84
	Lisburn Court Office	4.24	10.28	5.47
	Total	4.51	7.51	5.11

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	4.17	7.12	3.74

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	Total
All Offences Against the Person	178		178
All Sexual Offences	10		10
All Burglary Offences	53		53
All Robbery Offences	2		2
All Theft Offences	114		114
All Fraud and Forgery Offences	1		1
All Criminal Damage Offences	91		91
All Offences against the State	9		9
All Other Offences	128	1	129
All Drug Offences	17		17
All Motoring Offences	109	1	110
All Non-Police Offences	1	3	4
All Breach	7	1	8
Combination of charges	246		246
Total	966	6	972

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

	PSNI/PPS prosecution	Departmental prosecution	Total
Committed to the Crown Court	12		12
Plea of guilty on all charges	424	3	427
All charges withdrawn	325	2	327
Plea not guilty - found guilty on at least one charge	163	1	164
Plea not guilty - acquitted on all charges	42		42
Total	966	6	972

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	27	352	379
	Division total	27	352	379
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	12	148	160
	Limavady Court Office		6	6
	Magherafelt Court Office		19	19
	Division total	12	173	185
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	11	90	101
	Coleraine Court Office	11	112	123
	Ballymena Court Office	3	4	7
	Larne Court Office		16	16
	Division total	25	222	247
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	5	43	48
	Strabane Court Office	1	12	13
	Enniskillen Court Office	10	23	33
	Dungannon Court Office	9	46	55
	Division total	25	124	149
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	6	30	36
	Banbridge Court Office	8	32	40
	Newry Court Office	17	66	83
	Division total	31	128	159
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	18	137	155
	Downpatrick Court Office	3	37	40
	Bangor Court Office	1	37	38
	Division total	22	211	233
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	11	31	42
	Lisburn Court Office	6	50	56
	Division total	17	81	98

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	159	1291	1450

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	22	323	345
	Division total	22	323	345
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	8	122	130
	Limavady Court Office		7	7
	Magherafelt Court Office	1	14	15
	Division total	9	143	152
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	9	75	84
	Coleraine Court Office	4	104	108
	Ballymena Court Office	4	7	11
	Larne Court Office		18	18
	Division total	17	204	221
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	2	40	42
	Strabane Court Office	3	14	17
	Enniskillen Court Office	7	23	30
	Dungannon Court Office	9	43	52
	Division total	21	120	141
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	3	30	33
	Banbridge Court Office	4	21	25
	Newry Court Office	26	79	105
	Division total	33	130	163
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	12	108	120
	Downpatrick Court Office	2	32	34
	Bangor Court Office	1	29	30
	Division total	15	169	184
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	8	38	46
	Lisburn Court Office	11	69	80
	Division total	19	107	126

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	136	1196	1332

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	2.69	6.19
	Total	2.69	6.19
Londonderry	Londonderry Court Office	1.92	5.98
	Limavady Court Office	1.98	4.86
	Magherafelt Court Office	1.98	11.87
	Total	1.93	6.51
Antrim	Antrim Court Office	1.65	2.18
	Coleraine Court Office	1.18	4.11
	Ballymena Court Office	3.08	14.03
	Larne Court Office	2.21	4.01
	Total	1.53	3.86
Fermanagh and Tyrone	Omagh Court Office	2.00	7.72
	Strabane Court Office	2.04	3.76
	Enniskillen Court Office	1.87	5.54
	Dungannon Court Office	1.60	3.80
	Total	1.83	5.32
Armagh and South Down	Armagh Court Office	1.96	3.79
	Banbridge Court Office	1.65	.84
	Newry Court Office	2.87	5.80
	Total	2.50	4.63
Ards	Newtownards Court Office	1.26	7.42
	Downpatrick Court Office	2.10	4.82
	Bangor Court Office	1.46	4.65
	Total	1.45	6.49
Craigavon	Craigavon Court Office	.87	10.07
	Lisburn Court Office	.83	19.32
	Total	.84	15.94

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	1.95	6.52

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	Total
Non molestation	687	184	215	74	1160
Occupation	3	7	7	3	20
Vary discharge non-mol occupation	3	1	4	4	12
Total	693	192	226	81	1192

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