



Department of
Justice

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Analytical Services Group

County Court Bulletin

January to March 2019

Research and Statistical Bulletin

Provisional quarterly figures

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17 May 2019

Produced by Analytical Services Group,
Department of Justice.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This bulletin provides information on throughput at County Courts in Northern Ireland during the period January to March 2019 and commentary on trends observed for this quarter in each year from 2007. 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 January to March 2019:
- There were 1,872 civil bills with a notice of intention to defend (NID) received, a 12% increase on the same quarter last year (1,672). In total, 2,462 civil bills were disposed, a decrease of 3% on the number disposed during the same period in 2018 (2,529).
- 36 equity cases were received during January to March 2019, up by three cases compared to the 33 cases received during the period January to March 2018, while 49 equity cases were disposed, compared with 28 equity cases disposed during the same period last year.
- A total of 337 ejectment cases were received, up 2% on the 332 cases received during January to March 2018, with the number of ejectment cases disposed decreasing by 8%, from 254 in the same quarter last year to 234 this quarter.
- 2,662 small claims were received, down 18% on the 3,243 cases received during the same quarter last year. The number of small claims cases disposed decreased by 25% from 2,663 during January to March 2018 to 1,988 this quarter.
- Three criminal damage cases were received, compared to eight received during the period January to March 2018. Seven criminal damage cases were disposed during the quarter, compared with nine during the same quarter last year.
- A total of 327 divorce decrees were granted in the County Court, up 2% on the 322 granted during the same period last year.
- County Court and District Judges sat a total of 1,210 sitting days during the quarter, up 4% on the 1,166 sitting days recorded during the period January to March 2018. Some 55% of time was spent on criminal business with 28% spent on civil business and 17% on family business (compared to 55%, 29% and 16% respectively during January to March 2018).

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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 2019. 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 second quarter of 2019 and will be published on 16th August 2019.

2.5 Data quality and validation

ASG statisticians based in the NICTS have invested significant time and effort creating and 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

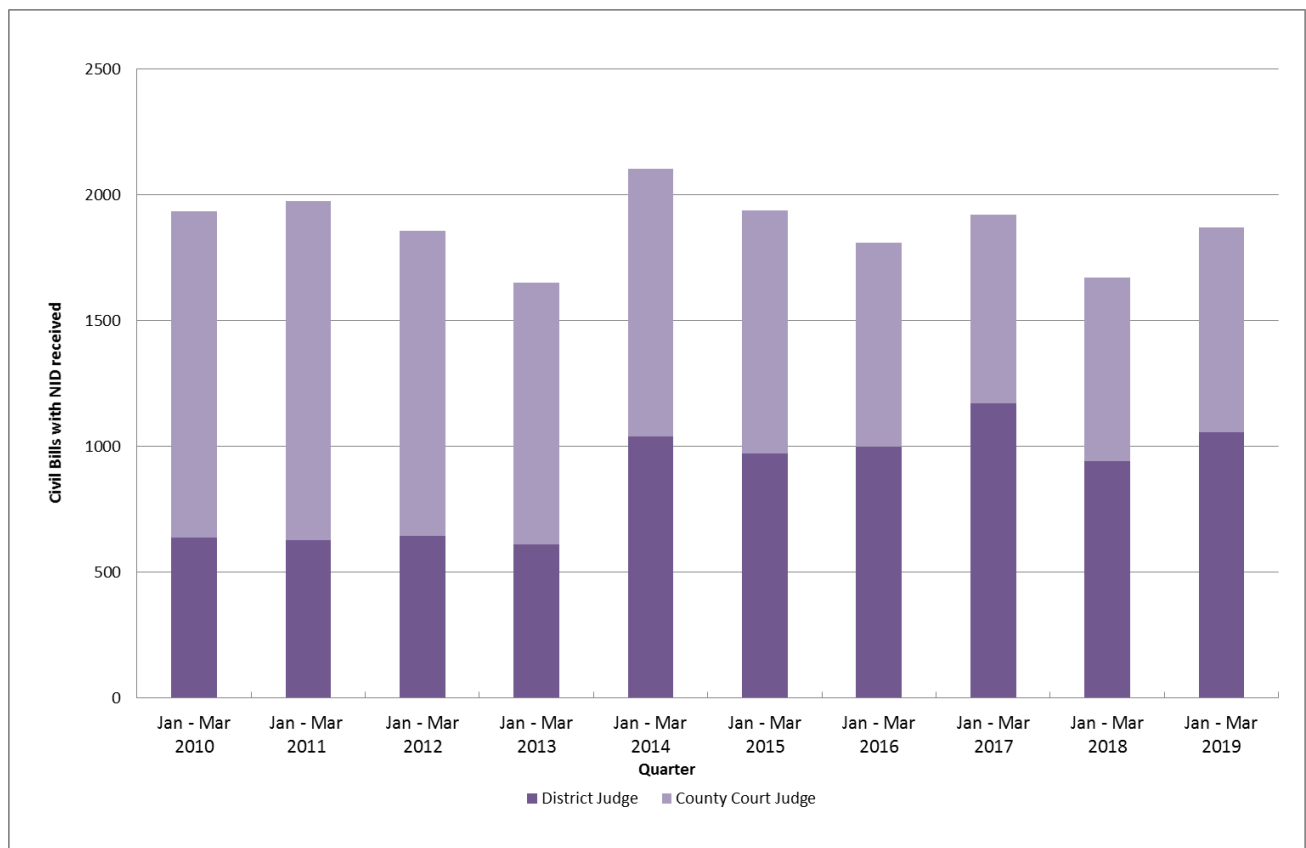
Any revision to data will be applied in light of the ASG (NICTS) Statistical Note ‘Policy Statement on Revisions’ which can be found at (www.justice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/justice/p_pd_stats_PolicyStatementRevisions.pdf). Incorrect figures of changes to this publication will be published on the web in a formal Statistical Notice.

3. FINDINGS

3.1 Ordinary civil bills

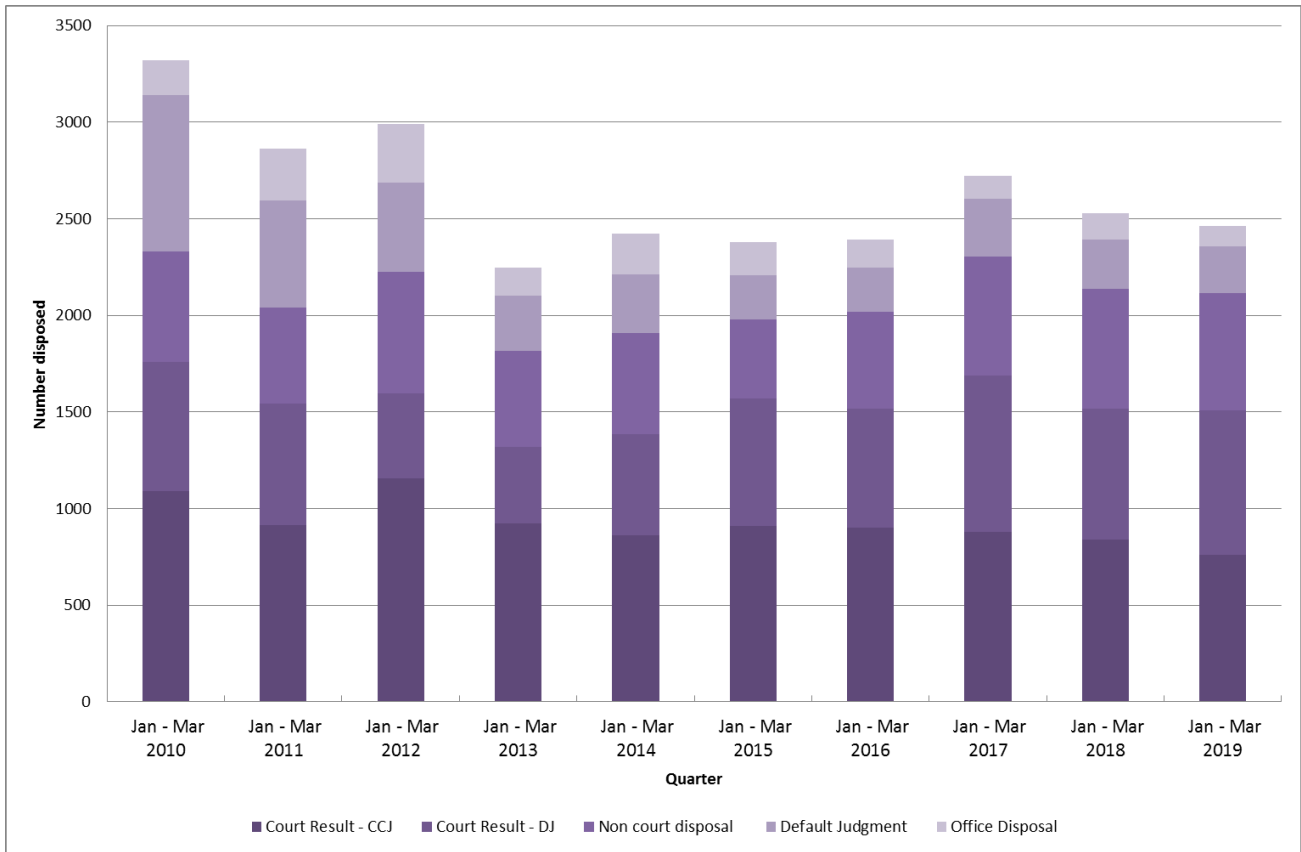
There were 1,872 civil bills with a notice of intention to defend (NID) received, a 12% increase on the same quarter last year (1,672) (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Civil bills with NID received – January to March 2010 to January to March 2019



In total, 2,462 civil bills were disposed, a 3% decrease on the 2,529 disposed during the same period in 2018 (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Civil bills disposed, by method of disposal – January to March 2010 to January to March 2019



The average time taken from issue to disposal of a civil bill was 53 weeks, compared to the 60 weeks reported for the same quarter in 2018.

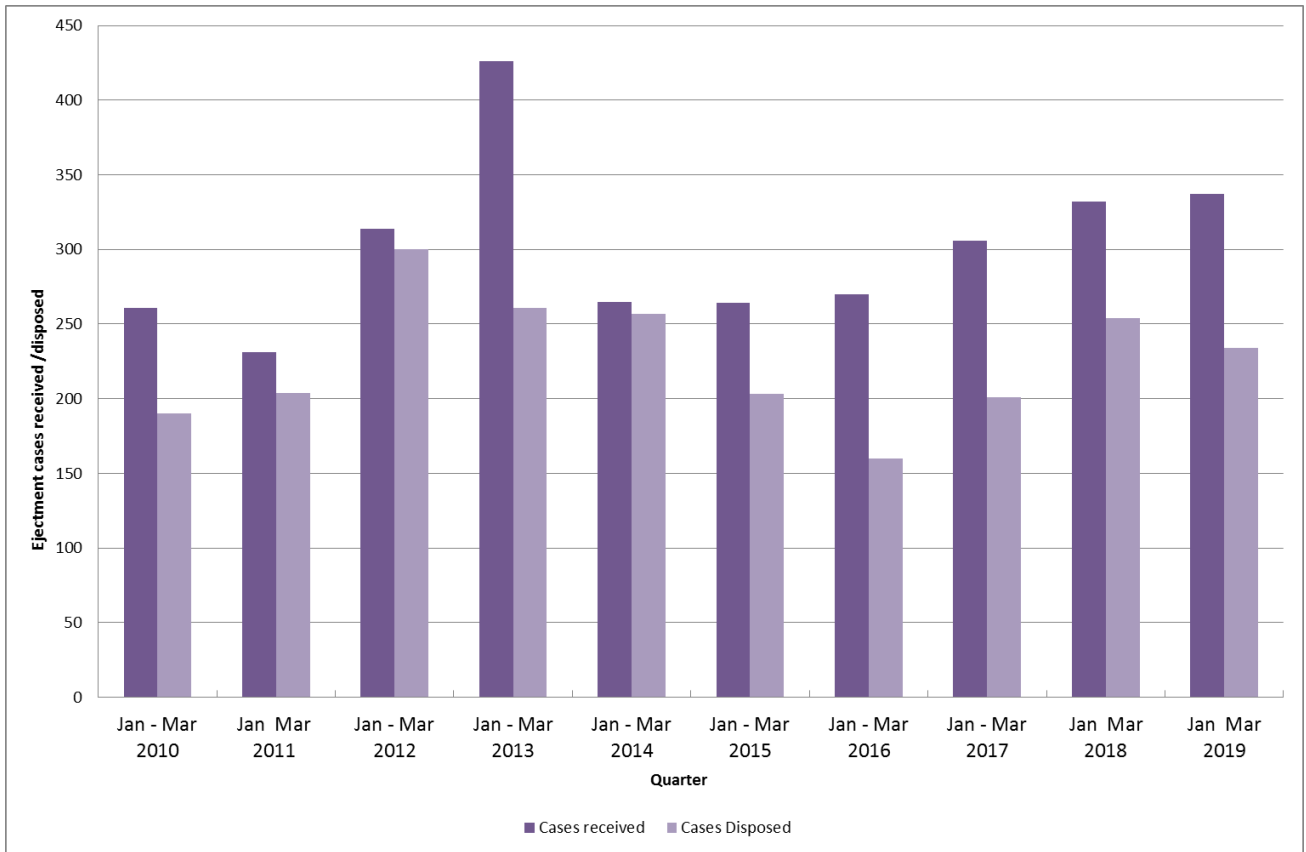
3.2 Equity

A total of 36 equity cases were received during January to March 2019, three more than the number received during the period January to March 2018 (33). The number of equity cases disposed increased from 28 during the period January to March 2018, to 49 this quarter. The average time taken from issue to disposal of equity cases was 122 weeks, up from 59 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 337 ejectment cases were received, up 2% on the 332 cases received during January to March 2018, with the number of ejectment cases disposed decreasing by 8%, from 254 in the same quarter last year to 234 this quarter (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Ejectment cases received and disposed – January to March 2010 to January to March 2019

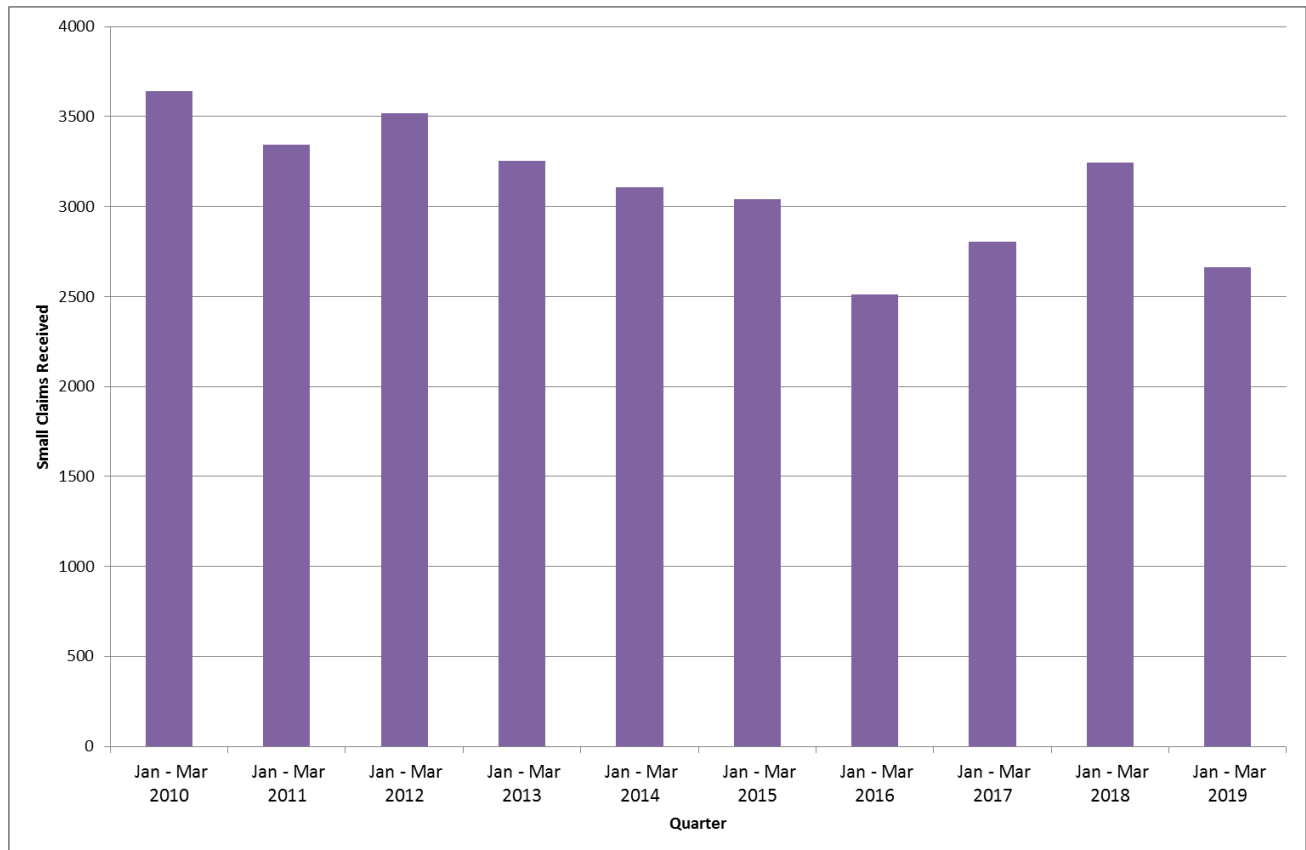


The average time taken from issue to disposal for ejectment cases was 23 weeks, compared with the 20 weeks taken during the January to March quarter in 2018.

3.4 Small claims

2,662 small claims were received, down 18% on the 3,243 received during the same quarter last year (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Small claims cases received – January to March 2010 to January to March 2019



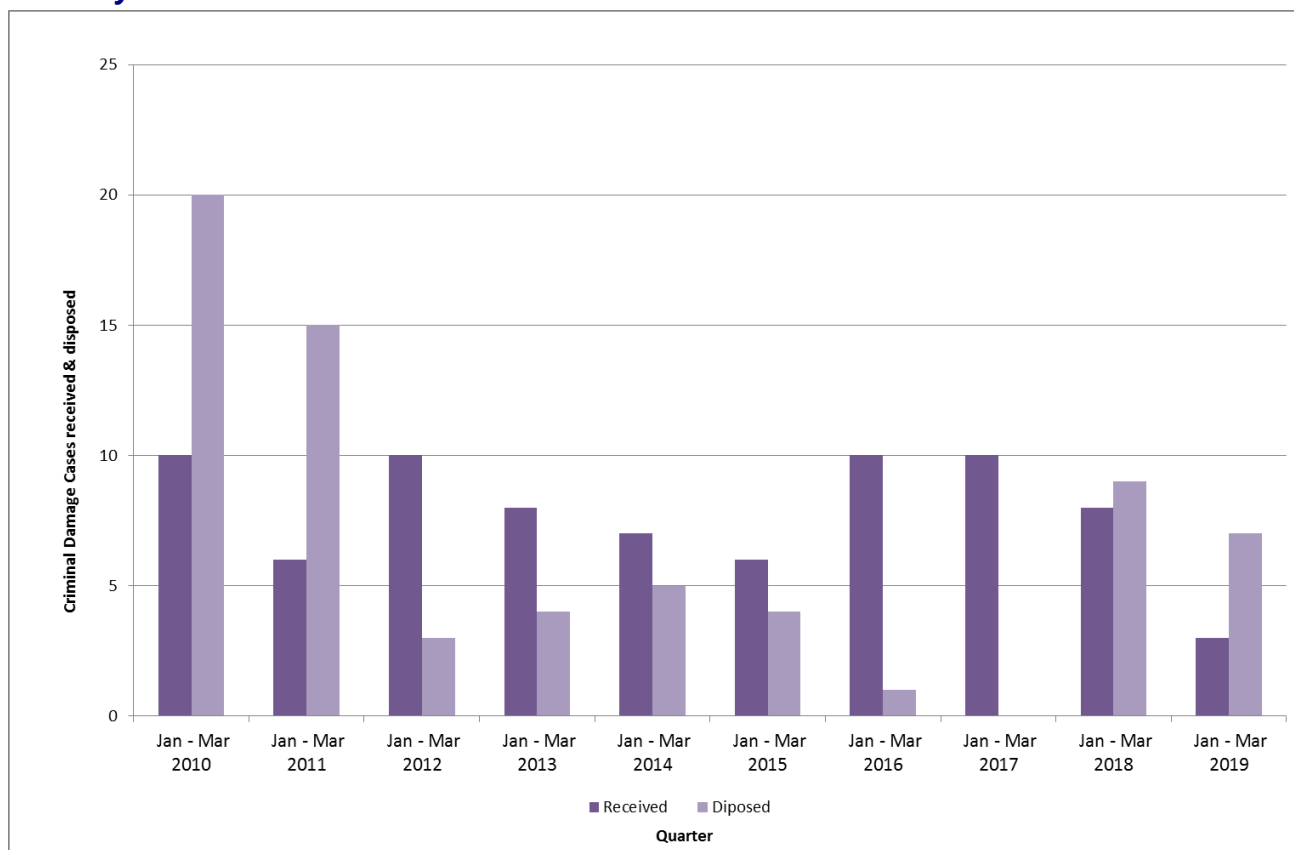
The number of small claims cases disposed decreased by 25% from 2,663 during January to March 2018 to 1,988 this quarter. Of the 1,988 small claims disposed during the quarter, the majority (61%) were disposed by way of default judgment.

The average number of weeks from issue to disposal for small claims cases was 23 weeks, the same as the corresponding quarter last year.

3.5 Criminal Damage

Three criminal damage cases were received, with seven disposed during the quarter. This compares with eight cases received and nine cases disposed during the same quarter in 2018 (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Criminal Damage cases received and disposed – January to March 2010 to January to March 2019



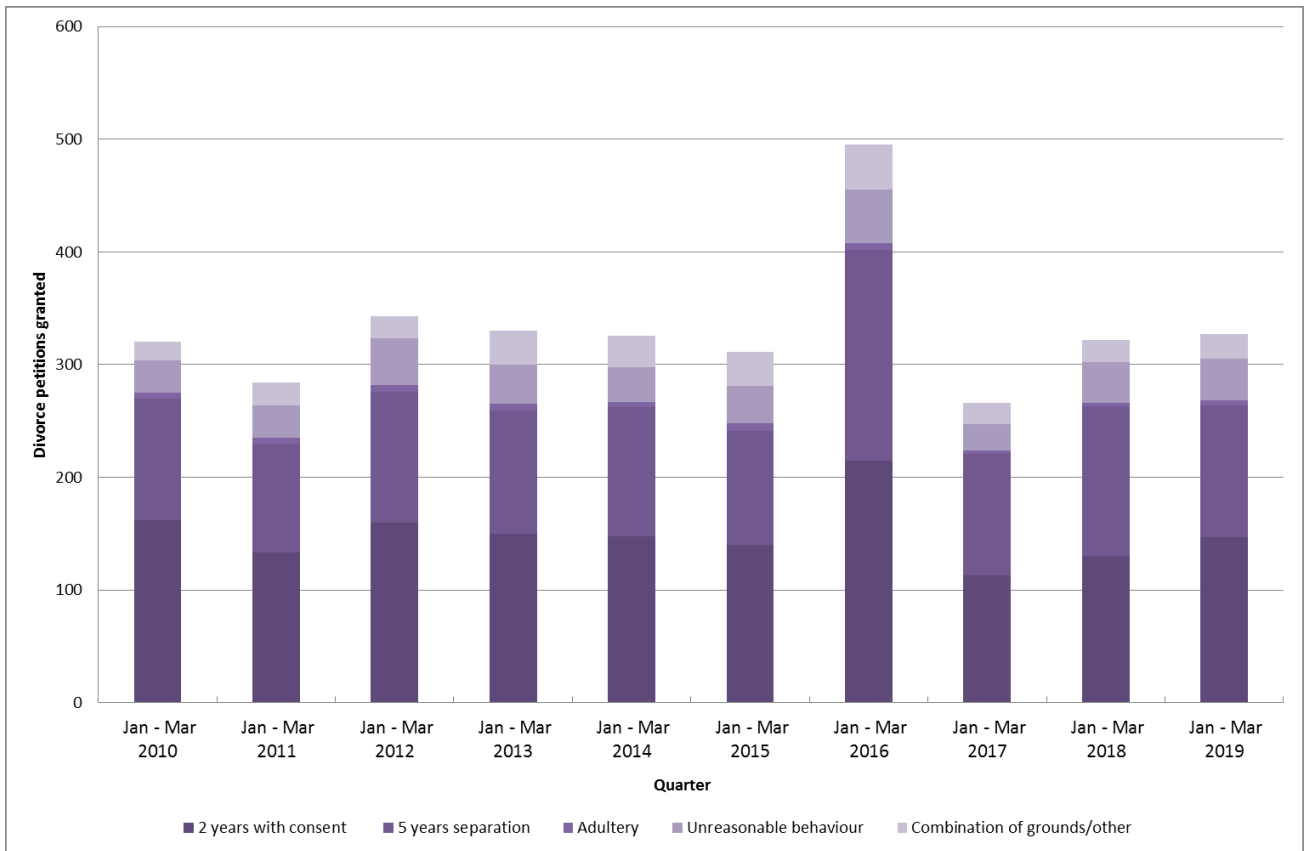
3.6 Divorces

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 327 divorce decrees were granted in the County Court, up 2% on the 322 granted during the same period last year.

The main type of divorce decree granted was '2 years with consent' accounting for 45% of decrees (147), followed by '5 years separation', accounting for 36% of decrees (117) (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Divorce petitions by number of decrees granted, by type – January to March 2010 to January to March 2019



A total of 434 decrees absolute were issued in the County Court, an increase of 21% on the 360 issued during the period January to March 2018. The most common type of decree absolute was ‘2 years with consent’, accounting for 44% (189) of cases.

The average time taken from issue to the date a divorce decree was granted was 32 weeks, with an average of eight weeks from the date the decree was granted until the date the decree absolute was issued. This compares to 30 weeks and eight weeks during the same period last year.

3.7 Licences

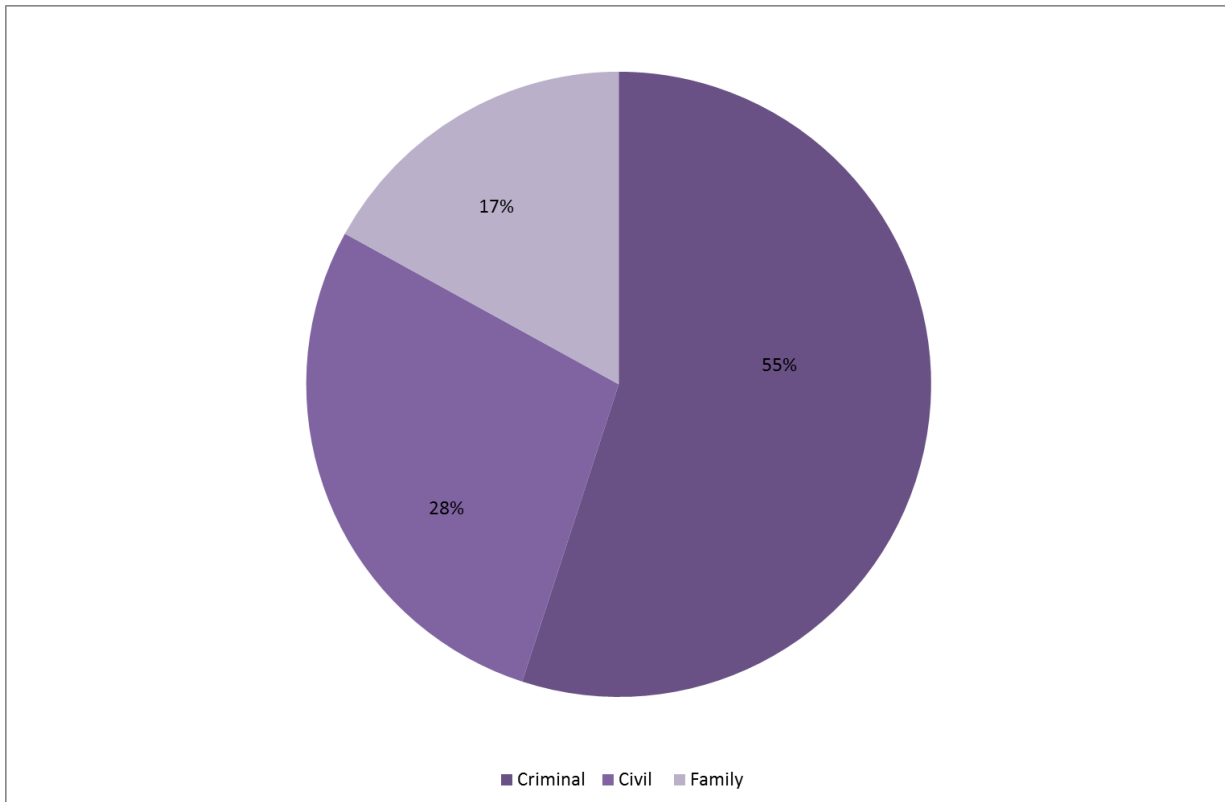
There were 53 licence applications received and 42 disposed, compared to the 47 received and 48 disposed during the same quarter last year.

3.8 Sitting Days

County Court and District Judges sat a total of 1,210 sitting days during the quarter, up 4% on the 1,166 sitting days recorded during the period January to March 2018.

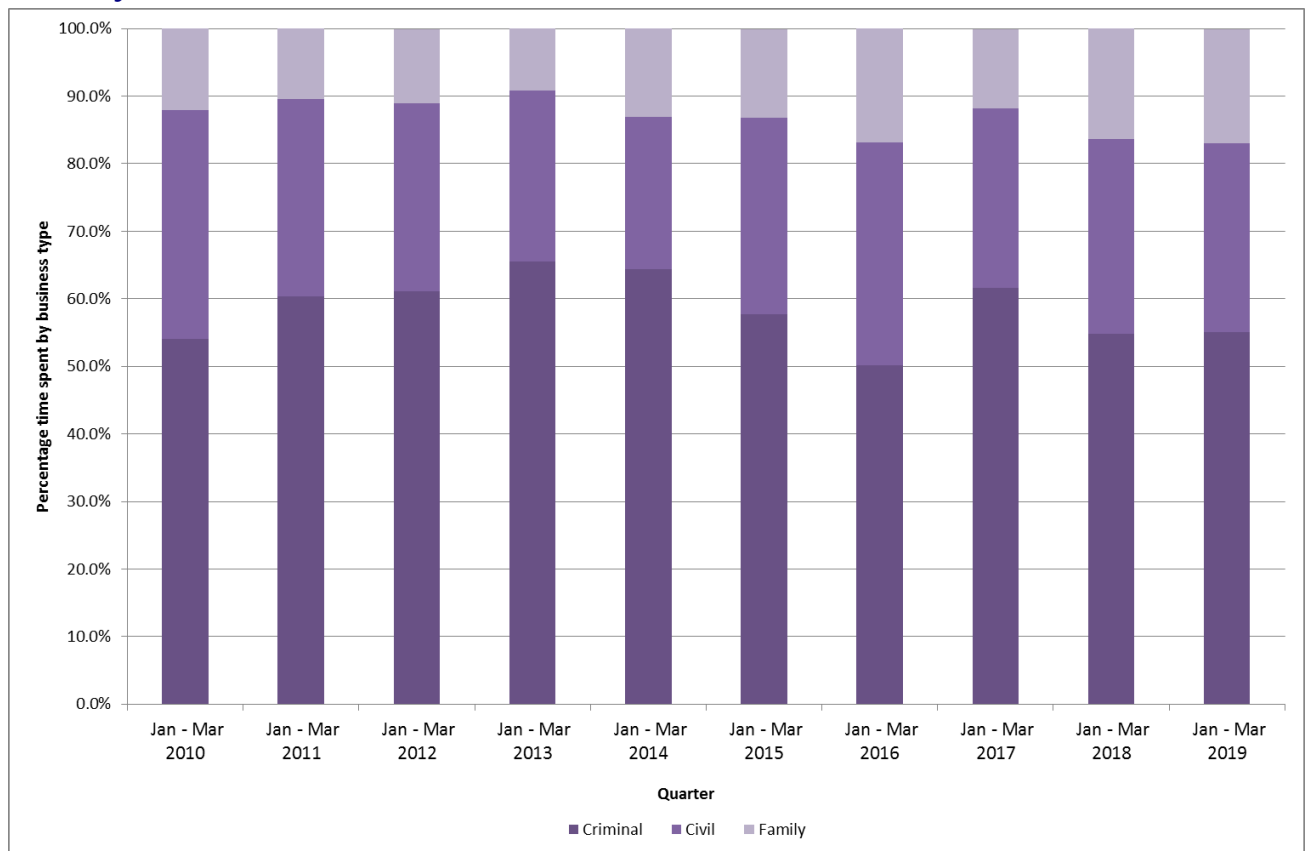
Within these 1,210 sitting days, 55% of time was spent on criminal business, 28% of time was spent on civil business and 17% of time was spent on family business (Figure 7).

Figure 7: County Court Sitting Days by Business Type – January to March 2019



The proportion of time spent on criminal business has fluctuated during January to March quarter since 2007, peaking at 66% during the quarter January to March 2013. 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 50% during January to March 2016, 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 increased, with the proportion of time spent by County Court Judges on criminal business increasing to 62% of sittings during January to March 2017, 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 decreased over the last two January to March quarters, with the proportion of time spent on criminal business falling to 55% this quarter.

Figure 8: County Court Sitting Days by Business Type – January to March 2010 to January to March 2019



APPENDIX 1 – TABLES

Civil Bills

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

Case	Laganside Courts	833
	Newtownards Court Office	152
	Downpatrick Court Office	70
	Craigavon Court Office	91
	Armagh Court Office	9
	Omagh Court Office	158
	Strabane Court Office	2
	Antrim Court Office	19
	Londonderry Court Office	87
	Enniskillen Court Office	5
	Coleraine Court Office	117
	Newry Court Office	139
	Limavady Court Office	1
	Magherafelt Court Office	8
	Ballymena Court Office	28
	Lisburn Court Office	81
	Dungannon Court Office	10
	Civil Processing Centre	1087
Total	2897	
Application	Laganside Courts	403
	Newtownards Court Office	95
	Downpatrick Court Office	14
	Craigavon Court Office	70
	Armagh Court Office	6
	Omagh Court Office	73
	Antrim Court Office	7
	Londonderry Court Office	50
	Coleraine Court Office	59
	Newry Court Office	82
	Ballymena Court Office	10
	Lisburn Court Office	44
	Civil Processing Centre	341
Total	1254	

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

	District judge	County court judge	Total
Lagside Courts	397	424	821
Newtownards Court Office	126	16	142
Downpatrick Court Office	16	54	70
Craigavon Court Office	54	37	91
Armagh Court Office	10	4	14
Omagh Court Office	104	76	180
Strabane Court Office	1	1	2
Antrim Court Office	15	6	21
Londonderry Court Office	63	29	92
Enniskillen Court Office	5	2	7
Coleraine Court Office	73	51	124
Newry Court Office	85	56	141
Limavady Court Office	1		1
Magherafelt Court Office	3	6	9
Ballymena Court Office	13	14	27
Lisburn Court Office	60	31	91
Dungannon Court Office	2	4	6
Civil Processing Centre	27	6	33
Total	1055	817	1872

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	417	257	206	9	32	921
	Newtownards Court Office	2	107	56	2	7	174
	Downpatrick Court Office	79	3	30		4	116
	Craigavon Court Office	24	48	38	1	7	118
	Armagh Court Office	8	7	7		1	23
	Omagh Court Office	72	110	35	4	5	226
	Antrim Court Office	4	2	6			12
	Londonderry Court Office	30	49	35		2	116
	Enniskillen Court Office	1	1				2
	Coleraine Court Office	41	49	68	2	8	168
	Newry Court Office	54	55	50	5	12	176
	Limavady Court Office	1	0	1			2
	Magherafelt Court Office	2	1	2			5
	Ballymena Court Office	5	9	10	1		25
	Lisburn Court Office	19	44	36	1	10	110
	Dungannon Court Office	3	1			1	5
	Civil Processing Centre		2	27	220		14
Total	762	745	607	245	103	2462	
Application	Laganside Courts	50	9	105			164
	Newtownards Court Office	7	2	17			26
	Downpatrick Court Office	10	0	1			11
	Craigavon Court Office	4	2	16			22
	Armagh Court Office	1	0	4			5
	Omagh Court Office	4	3	41			48
	Antrim Court Office	1	0	1			2
	Londonderry Court Office	11	4	16			31
	Coleraine Court Office	5	3	17			25
	Newry Court Office	8	7	15			30
	Ballymena Court Office	1	0	2			3
	Lisburn Court Office	6	0	3			9
	Civil Processing Centre		0	44			44
Total	108	30	282			420	

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	284	109	259	21	1	674
		Newtownards Court Office	10	37	60	2		109
		Downpatrick Court Office	9	7	52	14		82
		Craigavon Court Office	9	27	29	7		72
		Armagh Court Office	1	5	8	1		15
		Omagh Court Office	31	48	96	5	2	182
		Antrim Court Office	0	2	3		1	6
		Londonderry Court Office	27	22	27	3		79
		Enniskillen Court Office	1	1				2
		Coleraine Court Office	20	23	43	4		90
		Newry Court Office	20	24	57	8		109
		Limavady Court Office	0			1		1
		Magherafelt Court Office	0	1	2			3
		Ballymena Court Office	1	9	4			14
		Lisburn Court Office	15	21	26	1		63
		Dungannon Court Office	2		2			4
		Civil Processing Centre	1		1			2
		Total			431	336	669	67

Table 5: Outstanding civil bills with NID but no COR

	District judge	County court judge	Total
Laganside Courts	942	1296	2238
Newtownards Court Office	162	25	187
Downpatrick Court Office	23	81	104
Craigavon Court Office	81	82	163
Armagh Court Office	9	8	17
Omagh Court Office	227	215	442
Strabane Court Office	2		2
Antrim Court Office	26	22	48
Londonderry Court Office	154	106	260
Enniskillen Court Office	6	2	8
Coleraine Court Office	140	149	289
Newry Court Office	115	122	237
Limavady Court Office	2		2
Magherafelt Court Office	6	8	14
Ballymena Court Office	27	23	50
Lisburn Court Office	74	81	155
Dungannon Court Office	4	6	10
Civil Processing Centre	110	78	188
Total	2110	2304	4414

Table 6: Outstanding civil bills with COR

	District judge	County court judge	Total
Laganside Courts	272	525	797
Newtownards Court Office	64	6	70
Downpatrick Court Office	6	29	35
Craigavon Court Office	34	24	58
Armagh Court Office	13	11	24
Omagh Court Office	79	74	153
Strabane Court Office		1	1
Antrim Court Office	3	3	6
Londonderry Court Office	49	35	84
Enniskillen Court Office		1	1
Coleraine Court Office	77	75	152
Newry Court Office	59	45	104
Limavady Court Office	1		1
Magherafelt Court Office		2	2
Ballymena Court Office	5	6	11
Lisburn Court Office	22	28	50
Dungannon Court Office	1	4	5
Civil Processing Centre	1	1	2
Total	686	870	1556

Table 7: Time intervals in weeks for civil bill cases

Case	Issue to disposal
Laganside Courts	58
Newtownards Court Office	32
Downpatrick Court Office	46
Craigavon Court Office	42
Armagh Court Office	57
Omagh Court Office	58
Antrim Court Office	36
Londonderry Court Office	56
Enniskillen Court Office	258
Coleraine Court Office	43
Newry Court Office	40
Limavady Court Office	56
Magherafelt Court Office	43
Ballymena Court Office	36
Lisburn Court Office	45
Dungannon Court Office	385
Civil Processing Centre	72
Total	53

Table 8: Time intervals in weeks for civil bill applications

			Issue to disposal
Application	Processing Office	Laganside Courts	22
		Newtownards Court Office	20
		Downpatrick Court Office	1
		Craigavon Court Office	18
		Armagh Court Office	0
		Omagh Court Office	14
		Antrim Court Office	39
		Londonderry Court Office	10
		Coleraine Court Office	7
		Newry Court Office	12
		Ballymena Court Office	7
		Lisburn Court Office	16
		Total	

Equity

Table 9: Equity cases and applications received

Case	Laganside Courts	9
	Newtownards Court Office	1
	Downpatrick Court Office	1
	Omagh Court Office	6
	Londonderry Court Office	4
	Enniskillen Court Office	1
	Coleraine Court Office	5
	Newry Court Office	5
	Civil Processing Centre	4
	Total	36
Application	Laganside Courts	1
	Craigavon Court Office	3
	Omagh Court Office	7
	Londonderry Court Office	2
	Newry Court Office	6
	Total	19

Table 10: Equity cases and applications disposed

		Court result – CCJ	Court result – DJ	Non court disposals	Total
Case	Laganside Courts	5	1		6
	Downpatrick Court Office	8		4	12
	Craigavon Court Office	3			3
	Omagh Court Office	10		2	12
	Londonderry Court Office	2			2
	Coleraine Court Office	3		1	4
	Newry Court Office	5		3	8
	Lisburn Court Office	2			2
	Total	38	1	10	49
Application	Newtownards Court Office	1			1
	Downpatrick Court Office	2			2
	Craigavon Court Office			2	2
	Omagh Court Office	2		5	7
	Londonderry Court Office			1	1
	Total	5		8	13

Table 11: Outstanding equity cases

Case	Laganside Courts	29
	Newtownards Court Office	4
	Downpatrick Court Office	5
	Craigavon Court Office	7
	Armagh Court Office	1
	Omagh Court Office	66
	Londonderry Court Office	23
	Enniskillen Court Office	1
	Coleraine Court Office	31
	Newry Court Office	33
	Ballymena Court Office	5
	Lisburn Court Office	3
	Civil Processing Centre	36
Total		244

Table 12: Time intervals in weeks for equity

		Issue to disposal
Case	Laganside Courts	43
	Downpatrick Court Office	169
	Craigavon Court Office	78
	Omagh Court Office	193
	Londonderry Court Office	80
	Coleraine Court Office	86
	Newry Court Office	87
	Lisburn Court Office	69
	Total	122
Application	Newtownards Court Office	6
	Downpatrick Court Office	5
	Omagh Court Office	7
	Total	6

Table 13: Ejectment cases received

Case	Laganside Courts	97
	Newtownards Court Office	32
	Downpatrick Court Office	4
	Craigavon Court Office	8
	Armagh Court Office	1
	Omagh Court Office	6
	Londonderry Court Office	12
	Enniskillen Court Office	1
	Coleraine Court Office	5
	Newry Court Office	11
	Ballymena Court Office	3
	Lisburn Court Office	16
	Civil Processing Centre	141
	Total	337

Table 14: Ejectment cases disposed

		Court result - CCJ	Court result - DJ	Non court disposals	Total
Case	Laganside Courts		114		114
	Newtownards Court Office		34		34
	Downpatrick Court Office	1	0		1
	Craigavon Court Office		2		2
	Armagh Court Office		1		1
	Omagh Court Office	1	17		18
	Londonderry Court Office		12		12
	Coleraine Court Office		13	1	14
	Newry Court Office	1	7		8
	Ballymena Court Office		1		1
	Lisburn Court Office		27		27
	Civil Processing Centre		1	1	2
	Total		3	229	2

Table 15: Outstanding ejectment cases with NID

Case	Laganside Courts	19
	Newtownards Court Office	4
	Downpatrick Court Office	2
	Craigavon Court Office	1
	Omagh Court Office	9
	Londonderry Court Office	6
	Coleraine Court Office	2
	Newry Court Office	2
	Civil Processing Centre	7
Total	52	

Table 16: Time intervals in weeks for ejectment

		Issue to disposal
Case	Laganside Courts	21
	Newtownards Court Office	22
	Downpatrick Court Office	29
	Craigavon Court Office	8
	Armagh Court Office	8
	Omagh Court Office	27
	Londonderry Court Office	20
	Coleraine Court Office	31
	Newry Court Office	33
	Ballymena Court Office	12
	Lisburn Court Office	25
	Civil Processing Centre	24
	Total	23

Small Claims

Table 17: Number of small claims cases and applications received

Case	Laganside Courts	125
	Newtownards Court Office	35
	Downpatrick Court Office	1
	Craigavon Court Office	22
	Armagh Court Office	3
	Omagh Court Office	27
	Londonderry Court Office	21
	Enniskillen Court Office	1
	Coleraine Court Office	18
	Newry Court Office	13
	Ballymena Court Office	9
	Lisburn Court Office	8
	Civil Processing Centre	2379
	Total	2662
Application	Laganside Courts	13
	Newtownards Court Office	3
	Downpatrick Court Office	1
	Craigavon Court Office	4
	Omagh Court Office	4
	Coleraine Court Office	2
	Newry Court Office	4
	Lisburn Court Office	3
	Civil Processing Centre	8
	Total	42

Table 18: Number of small claims cases with NODs received

Case	Laganside Courts	109
	Newtownards Court Office	32
	Downpatrick Court Office	3
	Craigavon Court Office	24
	Armagh Court Office	3
	Omagh Court Office	26
	Londonderry Court Office	14
	Coleraine Court Office	16
	Newry Court Office	16
	Ballymena Court Office	7
	Lisburn Court Office	6
	Civil Processing Centre	3
Total	259	

Table 19: Number of small claims cases and applications disposed

		Court disposal	Court disposal	Office disposal	Default judgement	Total
Case	Laganside Courts	82	4	38	4	128
	Newtownards Court Office	27	1	13	1	42
	Downpatrick Court Office	2	0	1		3
	Craigavon Court Office	18	8	1	1	28
	Armagh Court Office	6	0	1		7
	Omagh Court Office	19	0	3		22
	Londonderry Court Office	22	1	4		27
	Enniskillen Court Office	3	0	2		5
	Coleraine Court Office	27	5	2	2	36
	Newry Court Office	15	0	2	1	18
	Ballymena Court Office	6	2	1		9
	Lisburn Court Office	10	2	1		13
	Civil Processing Centre		1	455	1194	1650
	Total	237	24	524	1203	1988
Application	Laganside Courts	18	0			18
	Newtownards Court Office	2	0			2
	Downpatrick Court Office		1			1
	Craigavon Court Office	3	0			3
	Omagh Court Office	4	0			4
	Londonderry Court Office		1			1
	Newry Court Office	2	1			3
	Ballymena Court Office		1			1
	Lisburn Court Office		1			1
	Total	29	5			34

Table 20: Outstanding small claims with NOD

Laganside Courts	187
Newtownards Court Office	32
Downpatrick Court Office	1
Craigavon Court Office	34
Armagh Court Office	6
Omagh Court Office	42
Londonderry Court Office	13
Enniskillen Court Office	2
Coleraine Court Office	33
Newry Court Office	26
Ballymena Court Office	10
Lisburn Court Office	9
Dungannon Court Office	1
Civil Processing Centre	16
Total	412

Table 21: Time intervals in weeks for small claims

		Issue to disposal
Case	Laganside Courts	21
	Newtownards Court Office	20
	Downpatrick Court Office	17
	Craigavon Court Office	19
	Armagh Court Office	21
	Omagh Court Office	20
	Londonderry Court Office	27
	Enniskillen Court Office	12
	Coleraine Court Office	42
	Newry Court Office	17
	Ballymena Court Office	13
	Lisburn Court Office	29
	Total	23
Application	Laganside Courts	7
	Newtownards Court Office	5
	Craigavon Court Office	16
	Omagh Court Office	8
	Newry Court Office	6
	Total	8

Criminal Damage

Table 22: Number of criminal damage cases and applications received

Case	Laganside Courts	3
	Total	3

Table 23: Number of criminal damage cases and applications disposed

		Court disposal
Case	Laganside Courts	6
	Omagh Court Office	1
	Total	7

Table 24: Outstanding criminal damage cases

Laganside Courts	21
Newtownards Court Office	4
Armagh Court Office	2
Omagh Court Office	6
Londonderry Court Office	1
Coleraine Court Office	2
Newry Court Office	7
Ballymena Court Office	1
Dungannon Court Office	2
Total	46

Table 25: Time intervals in weeks for criminal damage

		Issue to disposal
Case	Laganside Courts	149
	Omagh Court Office	156
	Total	150

Excludes default judgements, non-court disposals and office disposals

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	46	43	1	13	2	105
Downpatrick Court Office	19	11	0	2	1	33
Craigavon Court Office	16	13	0	5	4	38
Omagh Court Office	9	8	0	6	2	25
Londonderry Court Office	12	11	0	5	5	33
Coleraine Court Office	29	24	3	5	4	65
Newry Court Office	16	7	0	1	4	28
Total	147	117	4	37	22	327

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	47	52	1	10	11	121
Newtownards Court Office	2	3	0		1	6
Downpatrick Court Office	25	11	0	6	3	45
Craigavon Court Office	26	24	1	10	4	65
Armagh Court Office	2		0			2
Omagh Court Office	17	16	0	6	4	43
Londonderry Court Office	18	11	0	5	2	36
Coleraine Court Office	34	29	0	11	5	79
Newry Court Office	17	11	0	5	1	34
Ballymena Court Office		1	0			1
Lisburn Court Office	1		0			1
Dungannon Court Office		1	0			1
Total	189	159	2	53	31	434

Table 28: Matrimonial applications received

	Combination of grounds/other	Ancillary relief	Total
Laganside Courts		8	8
Newtownards Court Office	1		1
Craigavon Court Office		4	4
Armagh Court Office		1	1
Omagh Court Office		1	1
Londonderry Court Office		9	9
Coleraine Court Office		14	14
Newry Court Office		6	6
Ballymena Court Office		1	1
Total	1	44	45

Table 29: Matrimonial applications disposed

	Combination of grounds/other	Ancillary relief	Other	Total
Laganside Courts		5	0	5
Newtownards Court Office	1	4	0	5
Craigavon Court Office		10	2	12
Armagh Court Office		1	0	1
Omagh Court Office		3	0	3
Londonderry Court Office		5	0	5
Coleraine Court Office		6	0	6
Newry Court Office		6	0	6
Ballymena Court Office		2	0	2
Dungannon Court Office		1	0	1
Total	1	43	2	46

Table 30: Time intervals in weeks for divorce petitions

	Issue to date decree granted	Date decree granted to date absolute issued
Laganside Courts	28	7
Downpatrick Court Office	23	10
Craigavon Court Office	42	9
Omagh Court Office	32	9
Londonderry Court Office	39	8
Coleraine Court Office	36	8
Newry Court Office	24	9
Total	32	8

Table 31: Time intervals in weeks for divorce applications

	Issue to disposal
Laganside Courts	49
Newtownards Court Office	25
Craigavon Court Office	25
Armagh Court Office	110
Omagh Court Office	19
Londonderry Court Office	47
Coleraine Court Office	33
Newry Court Office	30
Ballymena Court Office	25
Dungannon Court Office	74
Total	34

Excludes non-court disposals

Licences

Table 32: Licences received and disposed

Court Office	Licences Received	Licences Disposed
Coleraine	17	10
Newtownards	8	8
Newry	2	3
Laganside Courts	10	9
Craigavon	6	6
Omagh	7	4
Londonderry	3	2
Total	53	42

County Court and District Judge Sitting Days

Table 33: County Court Judge & District Judge Sitting Days

	Total time			Total criminal time	Total civil time	Total family time
	Number of sitting days	Average sitting	Total time			
Antrim	117	2:21:02	275:01:00	259:19:00	15:02:00	0:40:00
Ballymena	9	3:07:46	28:10:00	0:00:00	24:35:00	3:35:00
Laganside	454	2:55:24	1327:18:00	593:32:00	384:13:00	349:33:00
Armagh	44	2:24:47	106:11:00	2:17:00	103:49:00	0:05:00
Lisburn	14	2:24:47	33:47:00	8:42:00	24:30:00	0:35:00
Magherafelt	3	1:26:40	4:20:00	0:00:00	4:05:00	0:15:00
Dungannon	93	3:33:09	330:24:00	257:37:00	18:05:00	54:42:00
Downpatrick	75	2:30:12	187:46:00	170:40:00	14:31:00	2:35:00
Craigavon	121	1:48:42	219:13:00	143:59:00	28:23:00	46:51:00
Strabane	12	2:30:15	30:03:00	6:15:00	23:34:00	0:14:00
Omagh	23	3:53:39	89:34:00	12:10:00	50:23:00	27:01:00
Enniskillen	8	3:08:07	25:05:00	1:30:00	22:05:00	1:30:00
Coleraine	22	2:39:02	58:19:00	15:44:00	37:00:00	5:35:00
Londonderry	111	2:14:17	248:27:00	144:03:00	62:50:00	41:34:00
Newtownards	35	1:41:36	59:16:00	7:31:00	51:45:00	0:00:00
Newry	69	2:06:00	144:55:00	120:06:00	23:02:00	1:47:00
Total	1210	2:37:04	3167:49:00	1743:25:00	887:52:00	536:32:00

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 be 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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