



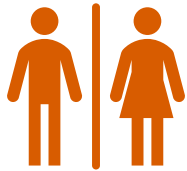


## Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission Equality Monitoring – 2023-24

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**81** appointments made from **412** applications in respect of **8** legal, medical and lay recruitment schemes



**Females** made up **48%** of those applying and **44%** of those recommended for appointment.



**Applications: 55%** Catholic, **35%** Protestant and **10%** Other/Neither/Not Indicated. Of those **recommended** for appointment **51%** Catholic, **43%** Protestant and **6%** Other/Neither/Not Indicated.



Those aged 40 or under made up **23%** of those **applying**, those aged 41-50 **36%** and **41%** were 51 or above. Of those **recommended for appointment 31%** were 40 or under, **26%** aged 41-50 and **43%** were aged 51 or above.



**5%** of **applications** came from applicants not identifying as White and they made up **5%** of those **recommended for appointment.**



**5%** of **applications** came from applicants identifying as having a disability and they made up **5%** of those **recommended for appointment.**



The east coast of Northern Ireland (Antrim, Belfast and Down) provided the majority of **applicants 77%** (by residence) and **70%** (by business location) and the majority of **recommendations for appointment, 84%** and **80%** respectively.



## ***Analysis of Data***

The purpose of the report is to provide NIJAC's diversity data as part of the respective Annual Report & Accounts for the year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

The Analysis of Data and attached annex provide information regarding NIJAC's applicant pools and recommendations for appointment in respect of the year 2023-24 (**Annex 1**). In providing these figures we also set them in the context of historical data (Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency ('NISRA') Report 2007<sup>1</sup>, NISRA Report 2011<sup>2</sup>, NISRA Report 2021<sup>3</sup>, the make-up of the judiciary as of 10 June 2024<sup>4</sup> and the available Census data from 2011<sup>5</sup> and 2021<sup>6</sup>).

NIJAC is statutorily required<sup>7</sup> to report on five principal characteristics<sup>8</sup> in relation to how '*reflective of the community*' are the applicant pool it attracts and the recommendations for appointment that it makes<sup>9</sup>. These characteristics are; Gender, Community Background, Age, Ethnic Origins and the part of Northern Ireland (if any) with which the individuals applying for judicial office regard themselves as most closely associated.

NIJAC has historically also monitored and reported<sup>10</sup> Disability as a characteristic and that data is included in this report. Those six characteristics constitute the substance of the report.

There are a number of instances where the holder of one office is by courtesy of that role, also the holder of another (or more than one other) judicial office and there are

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<sup>1</sup> NISRA: The Judiciary in Northern Ireland: 2007 Equity Monitoring Report

<sup>2</sup> NISRA: The Judiciary in Northern Ireland: 2011 Equity Monitoring Report

<sup>3</sup> NISRA: The Judiciary in Northern Ireland: 2021 Equity Monitoring Report

<sup>4</sup> NIJAC's own data

<sup>5</sup> NI Census 2011 (NISRA - <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/census/2011-census>)

<sup>6</sup> NI Census 2021 (NISRA - <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/census/2021-census>)

<sup>7</sup> Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002 (as amended): Sch 2 s5 (3)

<sup>8</sup> All figures (in all metrics) expressed as percentages have been rounded to the nearest single decimal point. Where this results in a cumulative total of 99.9% no change has been made. Exact numeric figures are provided in Annexes 1-3 covering the individual period under review years.

<sup>9</sup> Those offices listed in Schedule 1 to the Justice (NI) Act 2002

<sup>10</sup> Through its Annual Report & Accounts



other instances where one individual holds more than one judicial office courtesy of success in more than one appointment scheme<sup>11</sup>.

There are 103 individuals who each hold *two* judicial offices; there are 20 individuals who each hold *three* judicial offices and there are 7 individuals who each hold *four* judicial offices. No data has been altered to remediate any impact multiple office holding may have on the breakdown of the judiciary.

NIJAC made 81 appointments from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The 81 Recommendations across the period under review have been made from 412 applications submitted in relation to 9 separate appointment schemes.

The 9 Recruitment schemes were (a) 3 Legal schemes, Deputy County Court Judge, Deputy Statutory Officer and Appeals Tribunal; (b) 5 Medical schemes for Medical Consultant Members of the Appeals Tribunal; Medical Generalist members of the Appeals Tribunal; Consultant Psychiatrist Medical Members of the Review Tribunal; Generalist Medical Members of the Review Tribunal and Medical Generalist Members of the Victims Payment Board and (c) 1 Lay Scheme for the Northern Ireland Valuation Tribunal within Northern Ireland.

This represents a higher volume of non-legal recruitment competitions than in recent years, the different demographics amongst non-legal applicant pools may account for shifts in the diversity of those coming forward for selection and the persons recommended for appointment.

For those unfamiliar with the breakdown of judicial offices in Northern Ireland it may be valuable to note that almost half of all judicial offices do not require a legal qualification, with approximately one third being 'Medical' roles and the remainder requiring that the applicant to occupy a Lay role.

This number of appointments continues the recent trend of increasing annual numbers of appointments over the last four years (49 individual recommendations

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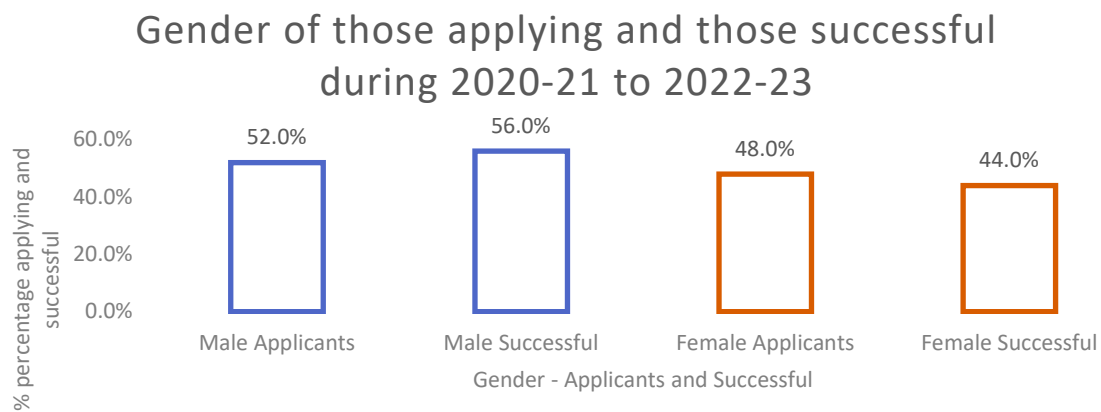
<sup>11</sup> Data is from NIJAC's Judicial Database on 10 June 2024. This includes 30 judicial office holders who hold multiple offices courtesy of one specific judicial office, e.g. County Court Judges being appointed as Coroners to hear inquests and Social Security Commissioner being a joint office with Child Support Commissioner.



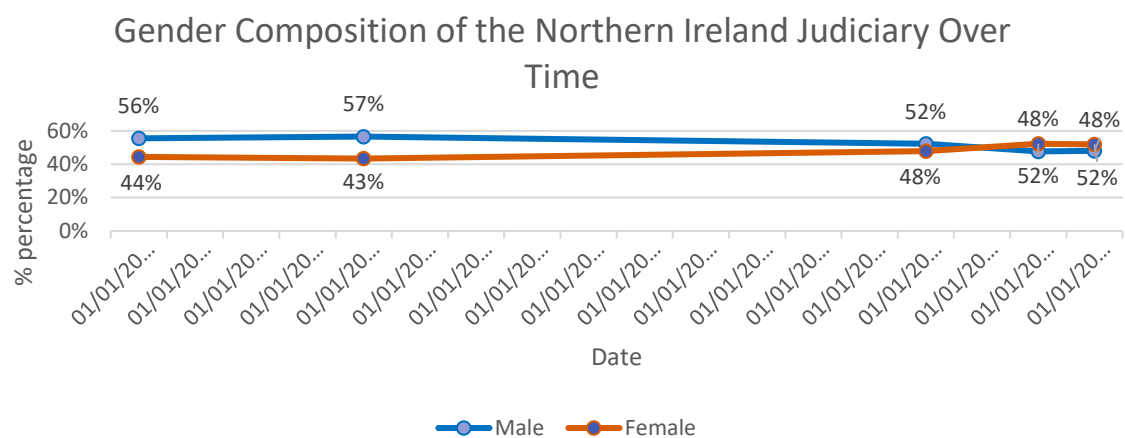
being made in 2020-21, 60 in 2021-22 and 65 in 2022-23 respectively). It should be noted however that NIJAC’s expected business over the 2024-25 year is planned to make less than 25 appointments, but through a comparable number of recruitment competitions. This means that NIJAC’s 2024-25 programme of work is expected to have minimal impact on the diversity of the judiciary.

### Gender

Of the 412 applications made during the period under review a small majority (52%) came from males, that share increasing to 56% of those recommended for appointment.



In 2007 there was a majority of males (55.6%) in Judicial Office. By 2011 that majority was 56.6% and by 2021 this majority had reduced to 52.2%. As of 10 June 2024<sup>12</sup> the gender breakdown of the judiciary in Northern Ireland is 52% female and 48% male.



<sup>12</sup> NIJAC analysis of data 1/9/23.



The 2021 Census results for Northern Ireland show a general population majority of females of 50.81%. Within that broader breakdown the 2021 Census also identifies that the 'Professional Occupations'<sup>13</sup> group shows a female majority of 56.5%.

This historic data indicates that judicial office has seen a steadily increasing proportion of female office holders since 2011 which (as of September 2023) resulted in female judicial office holders (across all offices) becoming the majority. This 2024 percentage is broadly in keeping with the general population and the specified group in 'Professional Occupations'. Therefore, the pattern of applications and recommendations for appointment of females over the last 12 years is in keeping with the general shift in applicant and appointee numbers.

However, it remains important to note that the percentage of females in salaried senior judicial roles (Court of Judicature and County Court) has remained at 21.2% for some time and therefore attracting female applicants to senior judicial offices remains a strategic priority for NIJAC.

### ***Community Background***

Of the 412 applications during the period under review 55% have been from Catholic applicants, 35% from Protestant applicants and 10% from applicants who identify as having an 'Other' background, 'Neither' background, or who have 'Not Indicated' their background (Other/Neither/Not Indicated).

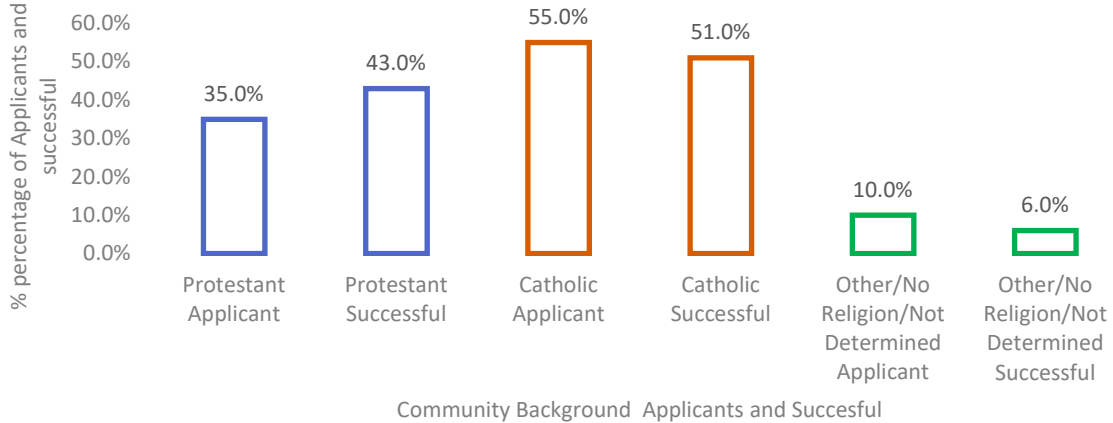
Of the 81 recommendations for appointment 51% have been of Catholic applicants, 43% of Protestant applicants and 6% of applicants who identified as Other/Neither/Not Indicated.

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<sup>13</sup> As defined by Office for National Statistics: Standard Occupational Classification 2020.

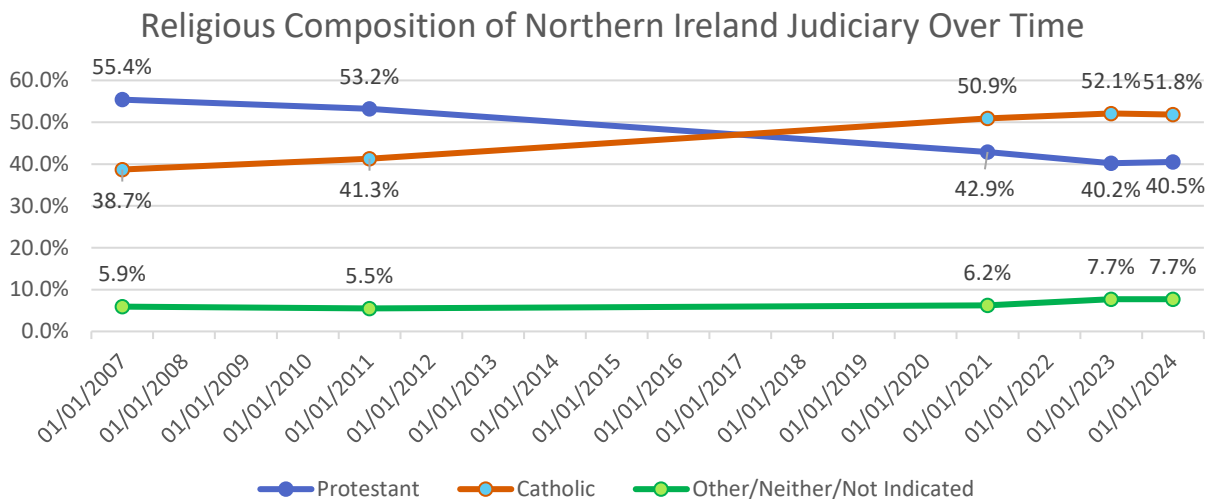


## Community Background of those applying and those successful during 2023-24



On 1 April 2007 the religious breakdown of the existing judiciary was 38.7% from a Catholic background, 55.4% from a Protestant background and 5.9% who identified as Other/Neither/Not Indicated. By 1 April 2011 the religious breakdown of the existing judiciary was 41.3% from a Catholic background, 53.2% from a Protestant background and 5.5% who identified as Other/Neither/Not Indicated. By 1 April 2021 the religious breakdown of the existing judiciary was 50.9% from a Catholic background, 42.9% from a Protestant background and 6.2% of applicants who identified as Other/Neither/Not Indicated.

As of June 2024 the community background breakdown of the judiciary in Northern Ireland is 51.8% Catholic, 40.5% Protestant and 7.7% Other/No Religion/Not Determined.

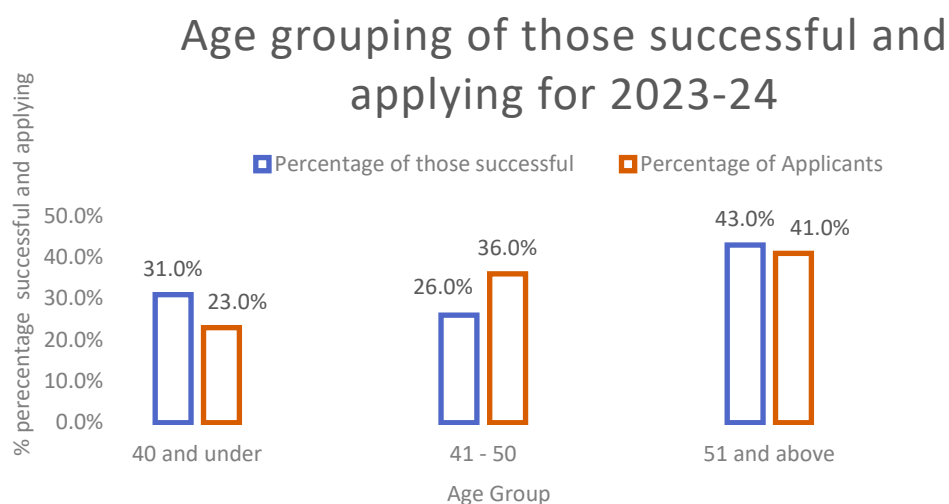




This compares with the 2021 Census results<sup>14</sup> for the Northern Ireland general population showing proportions of 45.7% Catholic, 43.5% Protestant and 10.8% Other/No Religion. Within the Legal Professionals portion of the community these proportions are 57.6% Catholic, 36.2% Protestant and 6.2% Other/No Religion.

## Age

Of the 412 applicants in the period under review 23% were under 40, 36% between 41 and 50 and 41% were 51 or above. Of the recommendations for appointment made 31% were of those aged 40 and under, 26% between 41 and 50 and 43% were aged 51 or above.



In 2007 11% of existing judicial office holders were aged 40 and under, 28.9% were aged 41 to 50 and 60.1% were aged 51 and above. By 2011 there were reductions in the percentages of both those 40 and under and those aged 41-50 (to 8.6% and 24.4% respectively). By 2021 those percentages had reduced further to 4.8% and 19.2% respectively. As of June 2024 those percentages now stand at 6% who are 40 and under, 18% aged between 41 and 50 and 76% are aged 51 and above.

Given the breakdown those recommended for appointment in the period under review the overall judiciary figure should be considered in the context of 'ageing effect'<sup>15</sup>, whereby the composition of the subject population changes over time due to their ageing.

<sup>14</sup> All figures in this paragraph based on Census Classification by 'Religion or Religion Brought Up In'

<sup>15</sup> For example a judicial office holder recommended for appointment at the age of 39 in 2011 is now (in 2023) aged 51 and has moved up from the lowest age bracket to the highest in the data comparison.



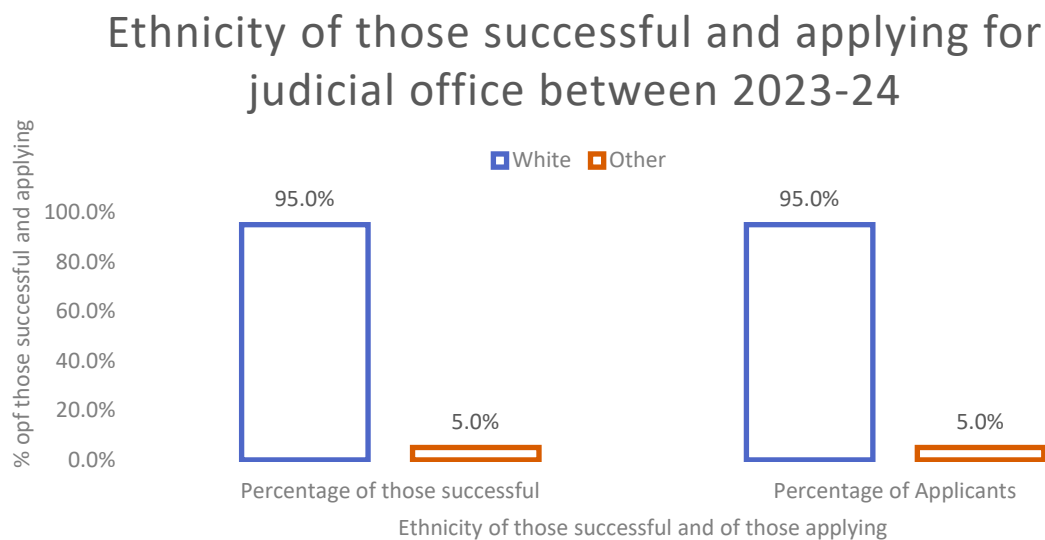
Given the impact of ageing effect, it is also important to consider the age at which judicial officers have been appointed. Analysis in September 2023 showed that of all the existing judiciary, 32.6% were first appointed when they were 40 or under, 30.7% between 41 and 50 and 36.6% were aged 51 and above when originally appointed.

This indicates that across all judicial offices recommendations for appointment have been made at broadly similar rates across the three age groupings and that the period under review has shown a departure from that collective pattern, toward those groups younger and older than the 41-50 group.

Of particular note may be that, whilst the 51 and above group saw applicants converted into a broadly comparable share of recommendations, the youngest age category (40 and Under) fared much better than the 41-50 group by gaining a larger share of recommendations in almost inverse proportion to the experience of the 41-50 group.

### **Ethnic Origin**

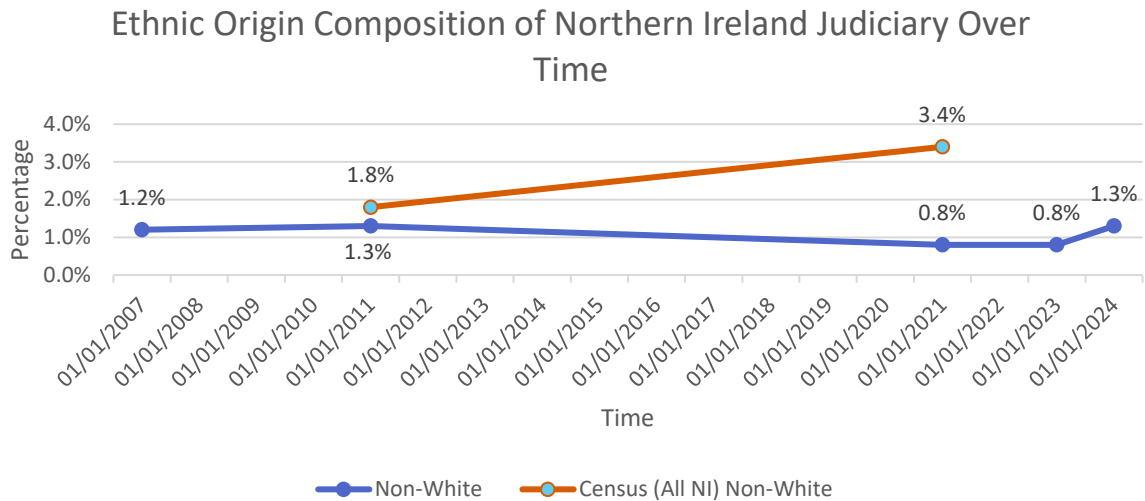
Of the 412 applications during the period under review 95% have been from applicants identifying as White and 5% from applicants identifying as other. Of the 81 recommendations for appointment during the period under review 95% have been of applicants identifying as White and 5% of applicants identifying as other.







On 1 April 2007 the Ethnic Origin breakdown of the existing judiciary was 98.8% identifying as White and 1.2% identifying as Other. By 1 April 2011 1.3% identified as Other. By 1 April 2021 0.8% identified as Other which remains the case as of 10 June 2024.



By comparison the Census in 2011 recorded an overall population figure of 1.8% Other and the 2021 Census a figure of 3.4% Other. Within the ‘Professional Occupations’ grouping the 2021 Census recorded the proportion of Other within that population at 4.8% and 1.8% within the ‘Legal Professionals’ sub-group of ‘Professional Occupations’.

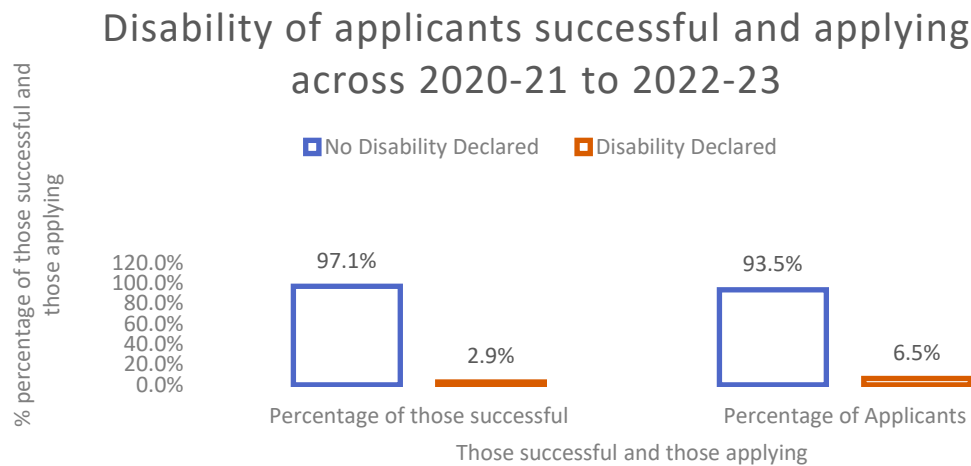
NIJAC is also conscious that there is growing debate around the accuracy of the classification of ‘White’ in the context of the inclusion of minority ‘White’ groupings whose actual diversity may not be recognised. It is estimated that a different classification of such groups would put the true figure of ethnic diversity within Northern Ireland at a figure closer to 8%. NIJAC continues to monitor developments in the interpretation of ethnicity and will consider the appropriate changes to its own monitoring in due course.

### **Disability**

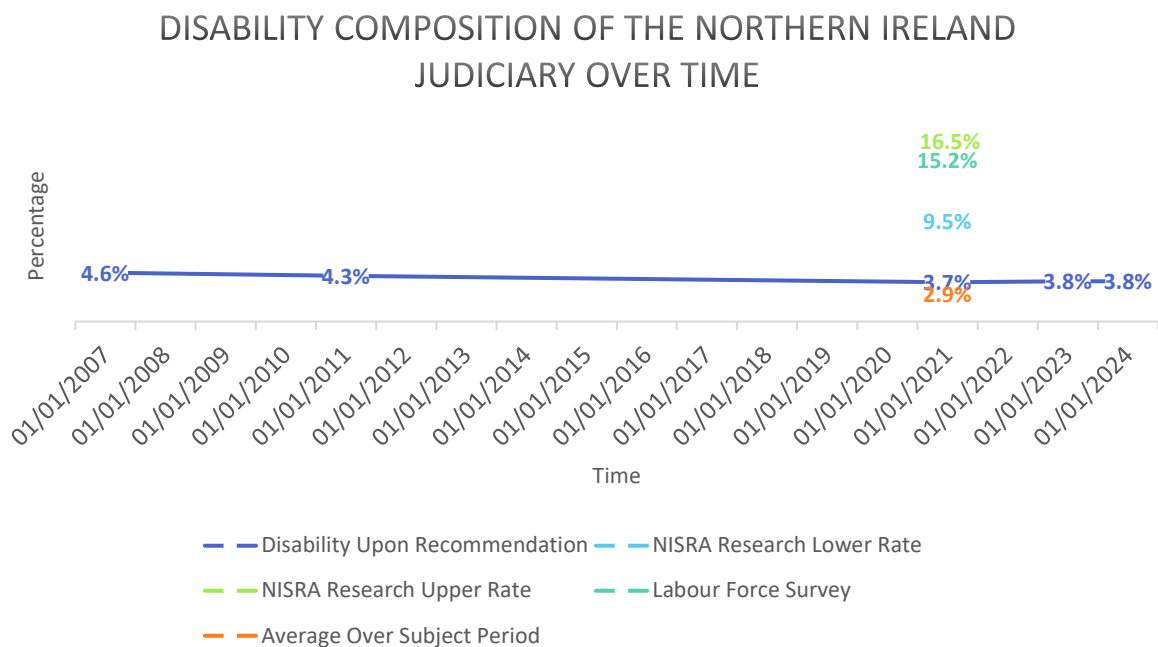
Of the 412 applications during the period under review 5% were from applicants identifying as having a disability.



Of the 81 recommendations for appointment during the period under review 5% were from applicants identifying as having a disability.



On 1 April 2007 the Disability breakdown of the existing judiciary was 95.4% identifying as not having a disability and 4.6% identifying as having a disability. By 1 April 2011<sup>16</sup> 4.3% identified as having a disability. By 1 April 2021<sup>17</sup> 3.7% identified as having a disability. As of 10 June 2024 these figures<sup>18</sup> now stand at 96.2% identifying as not having a disability and 3.8% identifying as having a disability.



<sup>16</sup> The Judiciary in NI: 2011 Equity Monitoring Report (NI Statistics and Research Agency – 2011)

<sup>17</sup> The Judiciary in NI: 2021 Equity Monitoring Report (NI Statistics and Research Agency – 2021)

<sup>18</sup> NIJAC’s own analysis as of 1/9/23



In 2022 NIJAC commissioned research into its disability data on the existing judiciary by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) <sup>19</sup> in acknowledgement that many disabilities are acquired through lifetime and therefore may not have been declared at the date of appointment to the judiciary.

NISRA conducted a survey of existing judicial office holders as part of their research. Following their research NISRA reported that the level of disability within the entire NI judiciary was likely to be in the range of a lower rate of 9.5% and an upper rate of 16.5%<sup>20</sup>.

By comparison, the NISRA report stated that data from the July – September 2021 Labour Force Survey<sup>21</sup> showed that 15.2 % of the economically active population (aged 16-64 year with a Degree or equivalent level of qualification – a broadly comparable group) had a disability.

This indicates that the ‘true’ rate of disability within the existing NI judiciary is likely to be broadly reflective of that of a comparable grouping within Northern Ireland.

### ***Location in NI with which they are most closely associated***

This characteristic is based upon two identifiable metrics of applicants, their residential postcode and their primary business postcode<sup>22</sup>.

### ***Residential***

Of the 412 applications during the period under review 41.6% resided in Belfast, 11.5% in Co. Antrim, 6.4% in Co. Armagh, 22.8% in Co. Down, 0.7% in Co. Fermanagh, 6.4% in Co. Londonderry, 7% in Co. Tyrone, 3.4% outside of Northern Ireland and no applicants failed to declare a residential postcode.

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<sup>19</sup> The resulting report ‘The Judiciary in Northern Ireland, Disability Survey 2022’ (NI Statistics and Research Agency) provides the data referred to.

<sup>20</sup> The NISRA research and the survey it included were anonymous and therefore NIJAC were not able to update their existing data against individual office holders, hence the current data reported above for 2023 does not reflect the actual likely rate of disability as revealed by the NISRA Research and the Survey included within it

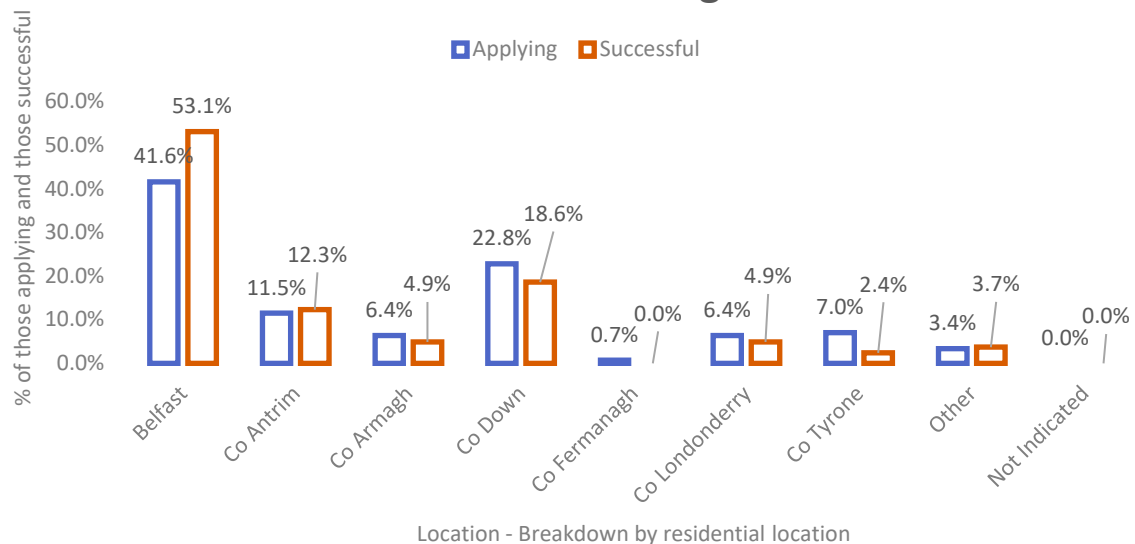
<sup>21</sup> NISRA <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/topic/labour-force-survey-151?page=2>

<sup>22</sup> NIJAC has historically always defined Belfast as a distinct entity in this data, the Co. Antrim and Co. Down figures do not include their respective Belfast data.



Of the 81 recommendations for appointment during the period under review the residential locations of appointees were 53.1% from Belfast, 12.3% from Co. Antrim, 4.9% from Co. Armagh, 18.6% from Co. Down, none from Co. Fermanagh, 4.9% from Co. Londonderry, 2.4% from Co. Tyrone and 3.7% from outside of Northern Ireland and no recommended applicants failed declare a residential postcode.

## Residential location of those applying and those successful during 2023-24



On 1 April 2007 the residential locations of the existing judiciary were 31.7% from Belfast, 13.6% from Co. Antrim, 6.4% from Co. Armagh, 19.3% from Co. Down, 4.3% from Co. Fermanagh, 8.3% from Co. Londonderry, 6.8% from Co. Tyrone and 9.6% from outside of Northern Ireland.

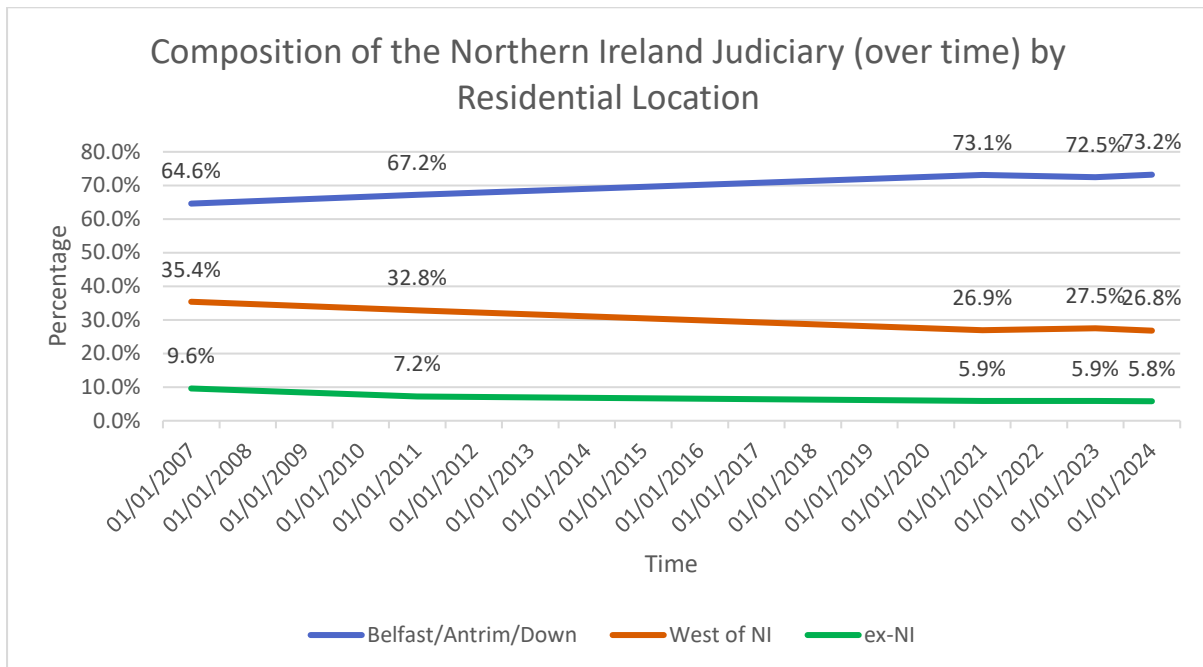
By 1 April 2011 the residential locations of the existing judiciary were 34.5% from Belfast, 13.6% from Co. Antrim, 5.2% from Co. Armagh, 19.1% from Co. Down, 4.1% from Co. Fermanagh, 8.7% from Co. Londonderry, 7.6% from Co. Tyrone and 7.2% from outside of Northern Ireland. By 1 April 2021 the residential locations of the existing judiciary were 38.3% from Belfast, 16.3% from Co. Antrim, 4.5% from Co. Armagh, 18.5% from Co. Down, 1.9% from Co. Fermanagh, 8.5% from Co. Londonderry, 6.1% from Co. Tyrone and 5.9% from outside of Northern Ireland.

As of 10 June 2024 those figures now stand at 37.7% from Belfast, 17.1% from Co. Antrim, 4.3% from Co. Armagh, 18.4% from Co. Down, 1.6% from Co. Fermanagh,



8.6% from Co. Londonderry, 6.5% from Co. Tyrone and 5.8% from outside of Northern Ireland.

For the purposes of a simple comparison the individual figures per area have been presented graphically using an 'East/West' split with 'East' containing Belfast, Co. Antrim and Co. Down. This 'East' area contains 63.2% of the Northern Ireland population as per the Census 2021.



This does indicate a clear trend over time whereby those residing in Belfast, Co. Antrim and Co. Down compose an increasing majority of the judiciary in Northern Ireland.

### Business

Of the 412 applications during the period under review 50.2% identified Belfast as their business postcode, 5.1% Co. Antrim, 2.2% Co. Armagh, 5.6% Co. Down, 0.5% Co. Fermanagh, 5.3% Co. Londonderry, 3.4% Co. Tyrone, 6.8% outside of Northern Ireland and 11.9% did not declare their business location<sup>23</sup>.

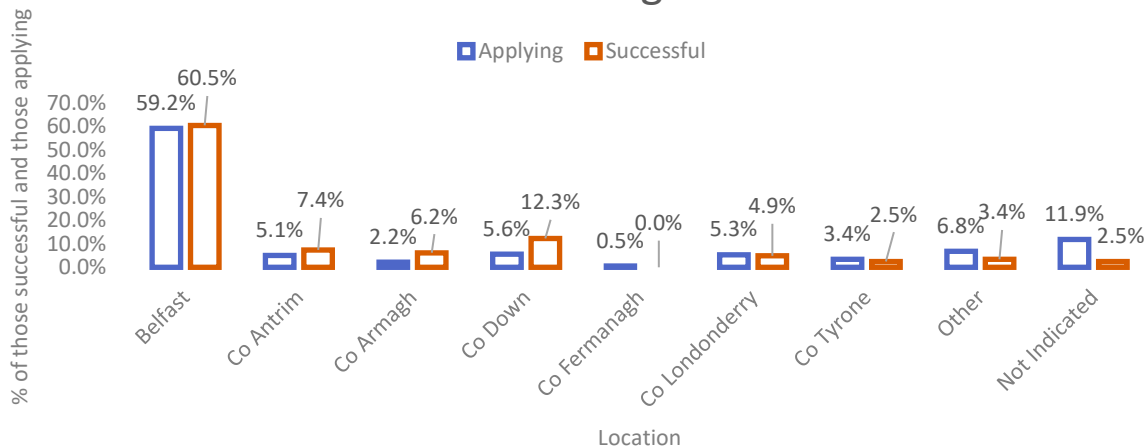
Of the 81 recommendations for appointment during the period under review the business locations of appointees were 60.5% from Belfast, 7.4% from Co. Antrim,

<sup>23</sup> While the detailed reasons for such a high return for non-declared cannot be specifically ascertained it is likely to be caused in part by the peripatetic nature of working across a range of the courts and tribunal locations in NI and also a consequence of new working approaches resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.



6.2% from Co. Armagh, 12.3% from Co. Down, 0% from Co. Fermanagh, 4.9% from Co. Londonderry, 2.5% from Co. Tyrone, 3.4% from outside of Northern Ireland and 2.5% had not declared their business location.

## Business location of those applying and those successful during 2023-24

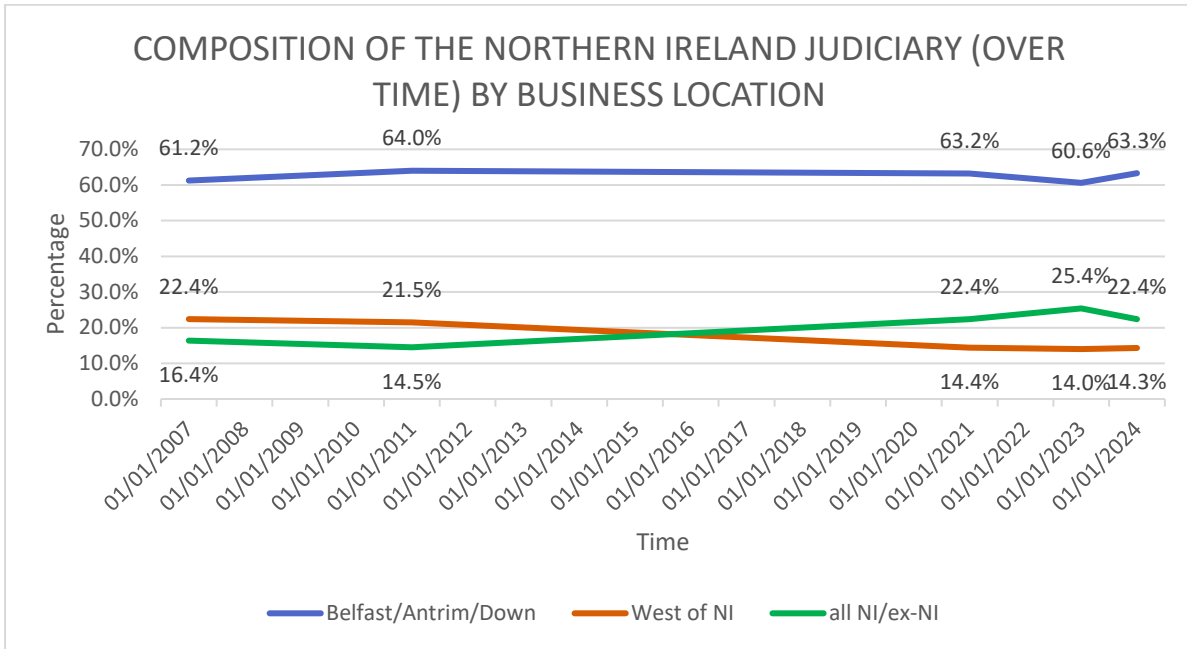


On 1 April 2007 the business locations (on appointment) for the existing judiciary were 43.1% from Belfast, 8.6% from Co. Antrim, 5.8% from Co. Armagh, 9.5% from Co. Down, 3.7% from Co. Fermanagh, 7.7% from Co. Londonderry, 5.2% from Co. Tyrone and 16.4% outside of NI/not declared.

By 1 April 2011 the business locations were 46.4% Belfast, 8.4% Co. Antrim, 4.6% Co. Armagh, 9.2% Co. Down, 3.6% Co. Fermanagh, 7.7% Co. Londonderry, 5.6% Co. Tyrone and 14.5% outside of Northern Ireland/not declared. By 1 April 2021 this was 49% Belfast, 7.7% Co. Antrim, 2.7% Co. Armagh, 6.5% Co. Down, 1.8% Co. Fermanagh, 5.7% Co. Londonderry, 4.2% Co. Tyrone and 22.4% outside of Northern Ireland/not declared.

As of 10 June 2024 these figures<sup>24</sup> stand at 47.6% Belfast, 7.7% Co. Antrim, 2.7% Co. Armagh, 6.7% Co. Down, 1.6% Co. Fermanagh, 5.5% Co. Londonderry, 4.1% Co. Tyrone and 21.8% outside of Northern Ireland/not declared. As with the 'Residence' figure above this data has been simplified into an 'East/West' split. In 2021 the 'East' area was responsible for c.70% of NI Gross Domestic Product.

<sup>24</sup> NIJAC's own analysis of 1/9/23



The trends for both residential and business location demonstrate a continuing focus on the east of Northern Ireland of those appointed to the judiciary over time.

When considering the residential and business locations it is also important to note that there has been a significant increase in those who view their practice as peripatetic or who are external to Northern Ireland since 2011. Given the continued dominance of the eastern areas as residential locations this would also be indicative of increasing numbers who reside in Belfast, Co. Antrim or Co. Down but who classify their practice as throughout Northern Ireland.

**Directorate of Appointments & Engagement**  
**Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission**  
**June 2024**



## **Annex 1 – Data for the Period 01/04/23 – 31/03/24.**

### **1. Recommendations for appointment (including applicant pools) during the Period 01/04/23 – 31/03/24.**

During the reporting period the Commission made 81 recommendations for appointment (Courts 23; Tribunals 58) –

1 DJMC (Scheme reported on last year), 13 Deputy County Court Judges (137 applications Received), 9 Deputy Statutory Officers (60 applications Received).

1 Full Time Chair of the Appeal Tribunals (7 applications Received), 4 Medical Consultant Members of the Appeal Tribunals (9 applications Received), 19 Medical Generalist Members of the Appeal Tribunals (40 applications Received), 4 Valuers for the Northern Ireland Valuation Tribunal (8 applications Received), 2 Consultant Psychiatrist Medical Members of the Review Tribunal (3 applications Received), 6 Generalist Medical Members of the Review Tribunal and 12 Medical Generalist Members of the Victims Payment Board (32 applications Received\*).

\*This was run as a joint scheme

**Note – all % are rounded to 1 decimal point**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	45	36	<b>81</b>
%	55.6%	44.4%	<b>100%</b>
<b>Applicant Pools</b>	216	196	<b>412</b>
%	52.4%	47.6%	<b>100%</b>

<b>Community Background</b>	<b>Protestant</b>	<b>Roman Catholic</b>	<b>Not Declared</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	35	41	5
%	43.2%	50.6%	6.2%
<b>Applicant Pools</b>	142	228	42
%	34.5%	55.3%	10.2%

<b>Age on Appointment / Application</b>	<b>35 and under</b>	<b>36-40</b>	<b>41-45</b>	<b>46-50</b>	<b>51-55</b>	<b>56-60</b>	<b>Over 60</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	13	12	10	11	7	18	10
%	16%	14.8%	12.3%	13.6%	8.6%	22.2%	12.3%
<b>Applicant Pools</b>	24	70	84	65	52	66	51
%	5.8%	17%	20.4%	15.8%	12.6%	16%	12.4%





<b>Ethnic Origin</b>	White	Other		<b>Disability</b>	No Disability Declared	Disability Declared
<b>Recommendations</b>	77	4		<b>Recommendations</b>	77	4
%	95%	5%		%	95%	5%
<b>Applicant Pools</b>	392	19		<b>Applicant Pools</b>	392	19
%	95%	5%		%	95%	5%

<b>Personal (Residential) Geographic Location</b>				
<b>Location</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Applicant Pool</b>	<b>%</b>
Belfast	43	53.1%	170	41.6%
Co Antrim	10	12.3%	47	11.5%
Co Armagh	4	4.9%	26	6.4%
Co Down	15	18.6%	93	22.8%
Co Fermanagh	0	0	3	0.7%
Co Londonderry	4	4.9%	27	6.4%
Co Tyrone	2	2.4%	29	7.0%
Other	3	3.7%	14	3.4%
Not indicated	0	0	0	0

<b>Business Geographic Location</b>				
<b>Location</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Applicant Pool</b>	<b>%</b>
Belfast	49	60.5%	244	59.2%
Co Antrim	6	7.4%	21	5.1%
Co Armagh	5	6.2%	9	2.2%
Co Down	10	12.3%	23	5.6%
Co Fermanagh	0	0	2	0.5%
Co Londonderry	4	4.9%	22	5.3%
Co Tyrone	2	2.5%	14	3.4%
Other	3	3.4%	28	6.8%
Not indicated	2	2.5%	49	11.9%