

2024 UK Judicial Attitude Survey

Northern Ireland judiciary

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24 February 2025

2024 UK Judicial Attitude Survey: Northern Ireland

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Executive Summary

UK Judicial Attitude Survey

The UK Judicial Attitude Survey (JAS) is a longitudinal survey of all serving judges in the UK, run by the UCL Judicial Institute on behalf of the judiciaries of Northern Ireland, England and Wales and Scotland.

- It is the only known recurring survey of the working lives of judges currently running in any jurisdiction.
- The aim of the JAS is to assess the attitudes, experiences and intentions of serving judges in key areas including the experience of being a judge, working conditions, remuneration, retention, recruitment, wellbeing, leadership, training and personal development.
- This is the fifth time the JAS has been run over a 10-year period (2014-2024).
- The 2024 JAS encompasses all salaried and fee-paid judicial office holders in Northern Ireland, England and Wales and Scotland. This includes members of the judiciary in the courts and tribunals.
- The JAS is a highly reliable indicator of the experiences, attitudes and intentions of judges in the UK, with almost all members of the judiciary in all jurisdictions taking part.

10-year trends across the UK judiciary (Northern Ireland, England & Wales and Scotland)

After a decade of surveying salaried judges in all 3 jurisdictions, a number of UK-wide trends have emerged on remuneration and retention.

- For a decade a majority of salaried judges in all 3 jurisdictions have repeatedly experienced a loss of net earnings at two-year intervals.
- Throughout the decade a majority of judges have said that their pay and pension entitlement does not adequately reflect the work they have done and will do before they retire.
- Over the decade only a minority of judges in all 3 jurisdictions have ever agreed that they are paid a reasonable salary for the work they do.
- Salaried judges have limited employment options because once judges take up a salaried post in Northern Ireland and England and Wales it is on the basis that they do not return to practice if they decide to leave the judiciary. Salaried judges in all 3 UK jurisdictions also cannot supplement their income with other forms of paid work.
- Despite these constraints, there has been an increase in salaried judges in all 3 UK jurisdictions planning to leave the judiciary early within 5 years. There has also been an increase in those that said they would leave the judiciary if it was a viable option.

2024 Judicial Attitude Survey Key Findings for Northern Ireland

This report covers salaried and fee-paid members of the Northern Ireland judiciary. Almost all judges in Northern Ireland took part in the survey, with a 91% response rate for the salaried judges and 71% of fee-paid judges in the courts.

Being a member of the judiciary

- Almost all salaried and fee-paid members of the judiciary in Northern Ireland are satisfied with the sense of achievement they get from the job (82-87%), the variety of their work (85-91%) and the challenge of the job (91-93%).
- Almost every salaried judge (92%) and fee-paid office holder (94%) feels they provide an important service to society. Almost all salaried (84%) and fee-paid (86%) judicial office holders also feel a strong personal attachment to being a member of the judiciary.
- Most (72%) of salaried judges in Northern Ireland felt that judges were respected by society less in 2024 than they were in 2022. And two-thirds (67%) of judges were extremely concerned by the loss of respect for the judiciary by government.
- Judges in Northern Ireland feel most valued by judicial colleagues, court staff, the legal profession and parties in cases before them and the senior judiciary. Half (50%) also feel valued by the public, but very few feel valued by the media (13%), the Northern Ireland Executive (12%) or the UK government (12%).

Working conditions

- Over half (51%) of salaried judges in Northern Ireland said that their overall working conditions were worse in 2024 than they were in 2022, while only a quarter (25%) of fee-paid judicial office holders felt working conditions were worse in 2024.
- While a majority of salaried judges (57%) said their case workload over the last 12 months was too high, most fee-paid office holders (66%) said their case workload was manageable and a quarter (25%) said it was too low.
- In the last two years judges' concerns for their personal security in court, out of court and on social media have all increased, and a majority of judges in Northern Ireland are now concerned for their personal security both in court (54%) and out of court (61%).
- Over the last decade, all building and space conditions in Northern Ireland rated excellent or good by salaried judges have declined except for one: the physical quality of judges' personal work space. In 2024 only 33% said the maintenance of court buildings was excellent or good and only 46% said the physical quality of their buildings was excellent or good.

Digital Working

- While a majority (61%) of salaried judges in Northern Ireland said the standard of IT equipment they have been given for their personal use was excellent or good, 57% of fee-paid office holders said it was poor or non-existent.
- Less than half of salaried judges (48%) and only a third of fee-paid office holders (35%) said the internet access at their court was excellent or good.
- Only a minority of salaried and fee-paid office holders in Northern Ireland said the availability of support and the quality of the technology for hybrid/remote hearings was excellent or good.
- The majority of salaried and fee-paid judges said that they were spending about the right amount of time in remote hearings.

Pay and pension: salaried judges

- Over the decade from 2014 to 2024 a majority of judges in Northern Ireland have said their pay and pension does not adequately reflect the work they have done and will do before retirement and they have had a loss of net earnings in the previous 2 years.
- Less than a quarter (24%) of judges said they feel they are paid a reasonable salary for the work they do.
- A majority of salaried judges in Northern Ireland (58%) earned more than their judicial salary prior to their appointment to the salaried judiciary.
- A majority of judges said the salary issue was affecting their own morale (63%) and the morale of other judges (70%).
- Over the decade the proportion of salaried judges in Northern Ireland that said that they would consider leaving the judiciary if this was a viable option has increased from only a third (33%) in 2014 to a majority of 55% now in 2024

Pay and sitting days: fee-paid judiciary

- Most fee-paid judges in Northern Ireland earn more in any non-judicial work they do than their day rate for judicial work.
- A majority of fee-paid office holders say the pension they receive for their part-time judicial work is an important aspect of the job (64%).
- Almost half (48%) of fee-paid office holders said that the amount of time required to do their work outside of sitting hours is not reasonable

Judicial stress

In the first national study of judicial stress, the 2024 UK JAS asked all members of the judiciary for the first time about the levels, nature and sources of stress in their job.

- While UK judges have a deep commitment to and high levels of satisfaction with their work, they are also experiencing high levels of stress.
- Very large proportions of judges in Northern Ireland reported stress symptoms over the last 2 years associated with their work as a judge. The most prevalent symptoms were sleep disturbances (70%), headaches (55%) and irritability (43%).
- The factors judges in Northern Ireland most often attributed to stress are: difficulties in achieving a reasonable work/life balance (61%); lack of personal time due to judicial workload (53%); types of evidence (46%); and personal safety concerns (46%).

Respect in the judicial workplace

- Most salaried judges in Northern Ireland feel that there is a good working environment at their court or tribunal (that people work well together and support each other).
- Most fee-paid judges said they are made to feel welcome by colleagues and staff at the courts/tribunals in which they work.
- But 36% of salaried and 23% of fee-paid judges in Northern Ireland have felt left out or excluded in their judicial role in the last year (primarily by not being included in communications, not listened to in meetings or undermined in front of colleagues/staff).

Bullying, harassment & discrimination

- While only a small minority of salaried and fee-paid judges in Northern Ireland said they had experienced bullying, harassment or discrimination in the last 2 years, there has been an increase since 2022 in the proportion of salaried judges saying they have experienced bullying (from 9% to 13%).
- There has been a decrease in the proportion of all judges in Northern Ireland saying they have experienced harassment and discrimination.
- Almost all judges in Northern Ireland who said they had experienced bullying, harassment and discrimination did not report it. This was primarily because they felt that reporting it would not make a difference and would have an adverse effect on their future in the judiciary.

Retention

- In the last 10 years there has been an increase in salaried judges in Northern Ireland saying they intend to leave the judiciary early in the next 5 years, from 33% in 2014 to 55% in 2024 saying they intend to leave early.

- The total number of salaried courts judges in Northern Ireland intending to leave early within the next 5 years is 28. If this is also combined with those who are currently undecided the total is 32.
- The factors making judges in Northern Ireland most likely to leave are increases in workload and limits on pay awards. Higher remuneration and better administrative support would make them more likely to stay.

Recruitment

- A majority of salaried judges in Northern Ireland (61%) said they would encourage suitable people to apply to join the salaried judiciary.
- 17% of fee-paid judges in Northern Ireland are currently considering applying for a salaried post. The factors making them most likely to apply are the opportunity to sit more often, challenge of the work, public service and intellectual satisfaction in the job. The judicial appointments process was the main factor that would make them less likely to apply for a salaried post.
- Most current fee-paid judicial office holders in Northern Ireland (79%) would recommend suitable people to apply for a fee-paid post.

Judicial training and opportunities

- Almost all salaried judges in Northern Ireland said that time to discuss work with colleagues (91%), support for dealing with stressful conditions at work (89%) and training (99%) were all important aspects of their jobs. But fewer judges said these opportunities were available to them.
- A majority of salaried judges are satisfied with both the range (52%) and quality (71%) of training, and 50% are satisfied with the time available to them to prepare for training.
- A majority of salaried judges would like more 1-day courses at or near their court (63%), more residential courses over several days (57%), more specialist courses for their specific part of the judiciary (69%) and more general judicial skills course (66%).
- Almost all salaried judges in Northern Ireland said that the most important opportunities were to use their legal knowledge and experience across a range of specialisms and areas of work (89%) and to gain new skills and broaden their legal knowledge and range of work (88%).
- There are three opportunities a majority of fee-paid courts judges in Northern Ireland said were important to them: to make use of the authorisations that they already hold (68%), to expand their knowledge of a specialist area of work (65%) and support and mentorship for becoming a salaried judge (60%).

Leadership

- Two thirds of salaried judges in Northern Ireland (65%) are interested in taking on a leadership role, but for 14% of these judges there are no leadership roles available in their jurisdiction and 16% would only be interested if they felt leadership roles were properly rewarded.
- A majority of salaried judges in Northern Ireland feel that case allocation is done fairly by their local leadership judge (57%)
- Most salaried judges In Northern Ireland feel they are treated fairly by their immediate leadership judge (79%) and that they receive good support from them (77%).
- A majority (69%) feel their leadership judge takes their opinions into account when making decisions that affect them, but almost a quarter (23%) were not sure about this or 8% disagreed.

Part I The UK Judicial Attitude Survey

Chapter 1 The survey

The UK Judicial Attitude Survey (JAS) is a longitudinal survey conducted with all serving judges in the UK. It is the only known recurring survey of the working lives of judges currently running in any jurisdiction¹. The aim of the JAS is to assess the attitudes, experiences and intentions of serving judges in key areas including the experience of being a judge, morale, working conditions, wellbeing, remuneration, retention, leadership, training and personal development.

The Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB) regards the regular running of the JAS as essential, calling it “a comprehensive evidence base from which to draw conclusions about judicial motivation and morale ... and a base from which to measure change against in future”² This is the fifth time the JAS has been run, preceded by earlier Judicial Attitude Surveys in 2022³, 2020⁴, 2016⁵ and 2014⁶. From 2014 to 2020, the target group for the JAS was all serving salaried judges in the courts and tribunals in Northern Ireland, England and Wales and Scotland. In 2022 the JAS was expanded to include all fee-paid judicial office holders in both the courts and tribunals judiciary.

This report provides the findings for salaried judges and fee-paid judicial office holders in Northern Ireland⁷. Judges in Northern Ireland make up 5% of all judges in the UK⁸. Where relevant, the report presents results by distinguishing between the views of salaried and fee-paid judges.

¹ In the 1990s and early 2000s, the Spanish General Council of the Judiciary (CGPJ) conducted a recurring survey of the working lives of its judges, although this is no longer run; see: *Encuesta a una Muestra Nacional de Jueces y Magistrados: Sexto Barómetro de Opinión de la Judicatura Española* (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, Julio 2003). Mexico recently ran a Judicial Attitude Survey based on the UK JAS, and Argentina will launch a JAS based on the UK JAS in 2025. In 2024 the UN issued a Declaration on Judicial Wellbeing that included as a principle that judicial wellbeing “initiatives and interventions should be evidence-based and continuously assessed and evaluated” through regular surveys similar to the JAS. See: <https://judicialwellbeing.info/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Nauru-Declaration-on-Judicial-Well-being.pdf>

² 37th Annual Report on Senior Salaries, Senior Salaries Review Body (2015)

³ 2022 UK Judicial Attitude Survey: Northern Ireland, Cheryl Thomas (2022)

⁴ 2020 UK Judicial Attitude Survey: Northern Ireland, Cheryl Thomas (2021)

⁵ 2016 UK Judicial Attitude Survey: Northern Ireland, Cheryl Thomas (2016)

⁶ 2014 Judicial Attitude Survey: Northern Ireland, Cheryl Thomas (2015)

⁷ Findings for the salaried and fee-paid judiciary in Scotland and the salaried and fee-paid judiciary in England & Wales and UK non-devolved Tribunals have been reported separately.

⁸ England & Wales courts judiciary, coroners and UK (non-devolved) tribunals judiciary comprise 89% of all judicial office holders in the UK; Scottish judges comprise 6% of all judicial office holders in the UK. These figures exclude lay magistrates in England and Wales and Justices of the Peace in Scotland.

Like its predecessors, the 2024 JAS was run as an online survey conducted by the Judicial Institute of University College London (UCL JI)⁹. It was run via the web-based survey tool Qualtrics. The survey was led by Professor Cheryl Thomas KC, Director of the UCL Judicial Institute, and a Working Group comprised of representatives from various judicial associations assisted Professor Thomas in the design of the 2024 questionnaire.

The survey was voluntary, and all judicial participants remained completely anonymous from the point of data collection¹⁰. The survey ran from 13 June 2024 through 19 July 2024. All salaried and fee-paid judges in Northern Ireland were invited to take part in the survey through personal communications from the Lady Chief Justice of Northern Ireland inviting judges and judicial office holders to contribute to the survey.

This Report

This Report provides results from the 2024 UK Judicial Attitude Survey (JAS) (Northern Ireland) and, where relevant the results, from the 2014, 2016, 2020 and 2022 JAS. The report is set out under the following themes:

- Being a member of the judiciary
- Working conditions
- Judicial IT and digital working
- Security
- Pay and pensions
- Retention and recruitment
- Judicial wellbeing
- Judicial stress
- Respect in the judicial workplace
- Training and personal development
- Leadership

The survey included 55 questions on the salaried judiciary version of the survey and 51 questions in the fee-paid version of the survey. Many of the questions from the 2014, 2016, 2020 and 2022 JAS were repeated in the 2024 JAS. This has enabled an assessment to be made of how, if at all, judicial attitudes, experiences and intentions may have changed over the last

⁹ Copies of the survey can be accessed on the UCL Judicial Institute website: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/judicial-institute/research/judicial-attitude-survey>

¹⁰ Anonymity of survey participants was assured at the point of data collection in Qualtrics, see: <https://www.qualtrics.com/support/survey-platform/survey-module/survey-options/survey-protection/#AnonymizingResponses>

decade for salaried judges and any changes for fee-paid judicial office holders from 2022 to 2024.

A few questions from the 2022 JAS were phrased differently in 2024 to increase clarity following a review of the 2022 JAS. Several new questions were added to the 2024 JAS, including a new section on judicial health and stress which reflects a growing international focus and study of the unique aspects of stress factors in judicial working life¹¹. In addition, the survey included a number of demographic questions covering judicial:

- professional background
- tenure in the judiciary
- tenure in current post
- caring responsibilities
- financial dependents
- age
- education
- sex
- disability
- ethnicity

Northern Ireland response rates

One of the main factors contributing to the value of the JAS is that, since its inception in 2014, the UK Judicial Attitude Survey has produced extremely high response rates.¹² This continued in 2024. The importance of these high response rates lies in the ability of the JAS to authoritatively reflect the views of virtually all judges in the Northern Ireland, producing a survey with an exceptionally high level of reliability.

Amongst salaried judges in Northern Ireland there was close to universal participation (92%). Given the part-time nature of fee-paid judicial officers, the same near universal response rates were not expected. Yet despite the greater challenge in reaching and engaging fee-paid judicial office holders, the 2024 JAS still managed to achieve a response rate of 70% of courts fee-paid judicial office holders, which enables a reliable analysis of results.

¹¹ See “Judges and Stress: An Examination of Outcomes Predicted by the Model of Judicial Stress” Charles P. Edwards et al, *Judicature*, Vol. 102 No. 3 (2018); “The privilege and the pressure: judges’ and magistrates’ reflections on the sources and impacts of stress in judicial work” Carly Schrever et al, *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law*, Volume 30, Issue 3 (2024)

¹² Survey industry data indicates that the average response rate to internal workplace surveys like the JAS is between 25%-33%.

Table 1.1: JAS salaried judges' response rates 2024

| Post | Total in post 2024 | Responses 2024 | 2024 JAS response rate |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Courts salaried judges | | | |
| District Judge | 4 | 4 | 100% |
| District Judge (Magistrates' Court) | 18 | 18 | 100% |
| County Court Judge | 18 | 16 | 89% |
| Master of the High Court | 7 | 7 | 100% |
| High Court Judge | 11 | 10 | 90% |
| Lord & Lady Justice of Appeal (inc LCJ) | 4 | 4 | 100% |
| totals | 66 | 64 | 97% |
| Other salaried judges | | | |
| Coroner | 4 | 4 | 100% |
| Tribunal judge | 12 | 7 | 58% |
| totals | 78 | 71 | 91% |

Table 1.2: JAS fee-paid judicial office holders' response rates 2024

| Post | Total in post 2024 | Responses 2024 | 2024 JAS response rate |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Courts fee-paid judicial office holders | | | |
| Deputy District Judge (Magistrates Court) | 19 | 18 | 95% |
| Deputy Statutory Officer | 17 | 11 | 65% |
| Deputy County Court Judge | 26 | 17 | 65% |
| Temporary High Court Judge | 5 | 3 | 60% |
| Retired Lord or Lady Justice of Appeal | 3 | 1 | 33% |
| totals | 70 | 50 | 71% |
| Other fee-paid judicial office holders | | | |
| Tribunal – Non-Legal Member | 297 | 74 | 25% |
| Tribunal Judge – Legal Member | 153 | 34 | 22% |
| Lay Magistrate | 101 | 46 | 46% |
| Deputy Coroner | 1 | 0 | 0% |
| totals | 552 | 154 | 28% |

How the results are presented

Key trends for the UK judiciary 2014-2024

The first results chapter presents key trends in the experiences and views of **salaried** judges in the three UK jurisdictions (Northern Ireland, England & Wales and Scotland) over the 10-year period 2014-2024. All the previous Judicial Attitude Surveys (in 2014, 2016, 2020 and 2022) were conducted with salaried judges in the three jurisdictions (fee-paid judicial office holders were only surveyed once before in 2022). This has enabled not just a comparison of judicial views on core issues at periodic times across the last 10 years, but also enables a comparison of judicial views between the three UK judiciaries. The focus in this chapter is on salary and pension, recruitment, retention, retirement and morale. These are issues which may be of particular relevance for the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB), which makes recommendations to the government on pay awards for all salaried judicial office holders in the three UK jurisdictions.

Results of the 2024 JAS for Northern Ireland

The remainder and main body of the report presents the findings for members of the judiciary in Northern Ireland. Some chapters present key trends over the decade from 2014 – 2024 for **salaried** judges only in Northern Ireland, and each chapter presents the 2024 results for salaried judges and fee-paid judicial office holders on specific topics. The results for the Northern Ireland judiciary are not presented by individual judicial post. This is because the number of individuals in most judicial posts in Northern Ireland is small, and if results of the 2024 Judicial Attitude Survey were broken down by individual judicial post this may not ensure the anonymity of all judges taking part in the survey. At the end of the report a demographic profile of the Northern Ireland judiciary is also presented.

Part II: UK Judicial Attitude Survey results 2014-2024 (Northern Ireland, England & Wales and Scotland)

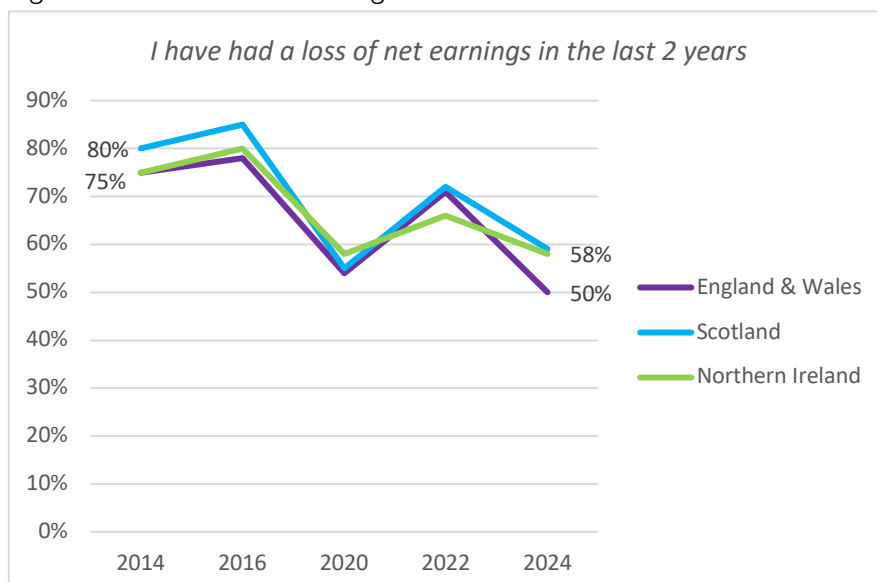
Chapter 2 Ten-year trends for the 3 UK judiciaries

This chapter provides comparative results of the experiences and views of **salaried judges** in the three UK jurisdictions (Northern Ireland, England & Wales and Scotland) over the 10-year period 2014-2024. All the previous Judicial Attitude Surveys (in 2014, 2016, 2020 and 2022) were conducted with salaried judges in the three jurisdictions (but not fee-paid judicial office holders). This has enabled a comparison of views between the salaried judiciaries in the three UK judiciaries over the last decade. The focus in this chapter is on pay and pension, working conditions, recruitment, retention and morale. These are issues which may be of particular relevance for the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB), which makes recommendations to the government on pay awards for all salaried judicial office holders in the three UK jurisdictions.

Loss of net earnings

Over the entire decade a majority of salaried judges in all 3 jurisdictions experienced a loss of net earnings at two-year intervals across the decade. While the overall percentage of judges experiencing a loss of net earnings has fallen from 2014 to 2024, at the end of the 10-year period half or more of all salaried judges in the UK were still experiencing a loss of net earnings.

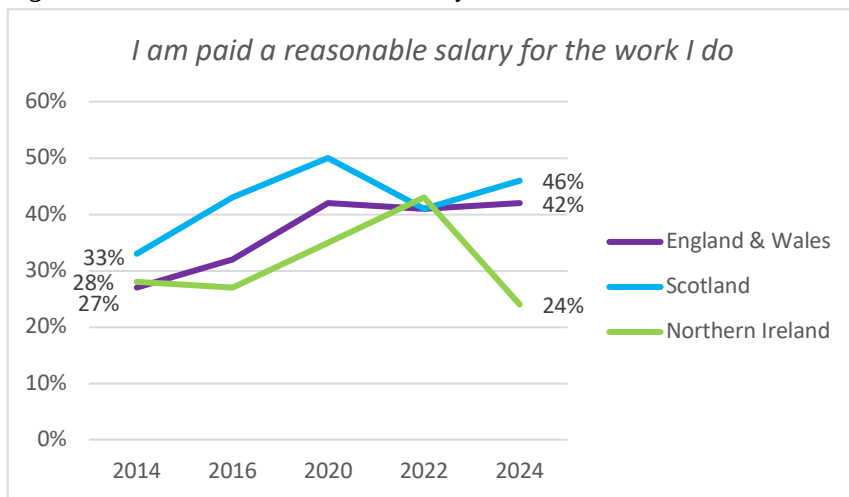
Figure 2.1: Loss of net earnings 2014-2024



Reasonableness of salary

Over the entire decade, only a minority of salaried judges in all 3 jurisdictions have ever agreed that they are paid a reasonable salary for the work they do. From 2014 to 2020 the proportion of salaried judges that felt their salary was reasonable for the work they do did increase in all 3 jurisdictions, but it has since either plateaued (England & Wales), fallen back (Scotland) or declined precipitously to a proportion lower than in 2014 (Northern Ireland).

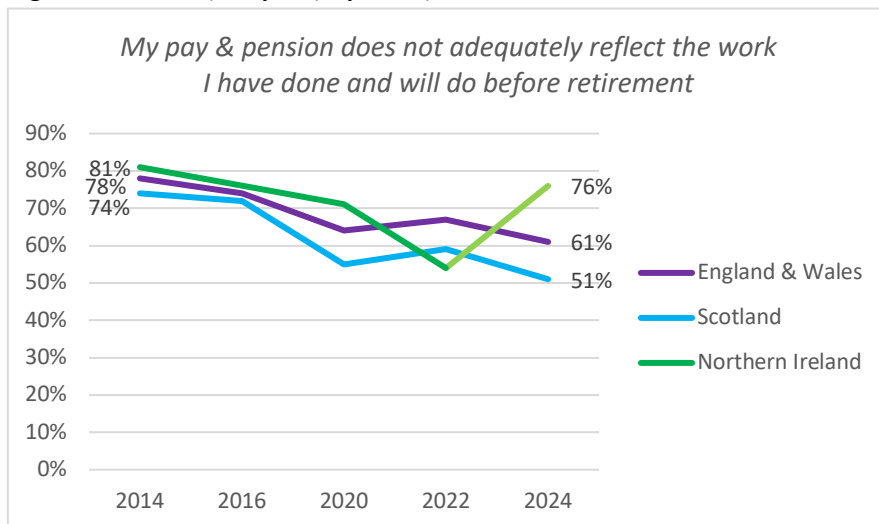
Figure 2.2: Reasonableness of salary 2014-2024



Pay and pension combined

Over the entire 10-year period from 2014 to 2024 a majority of salaried judges in all 3 jurisdictions have said that their pay and pension entitlement does not adequately reflect the work they have done and will do before they retire. While the proportions of salaried judges expressing this view has declined from 2014 to 2024, there has been a sharp increase in salaried judges expressing this view in Northern Ireland from 2022 to 2024.

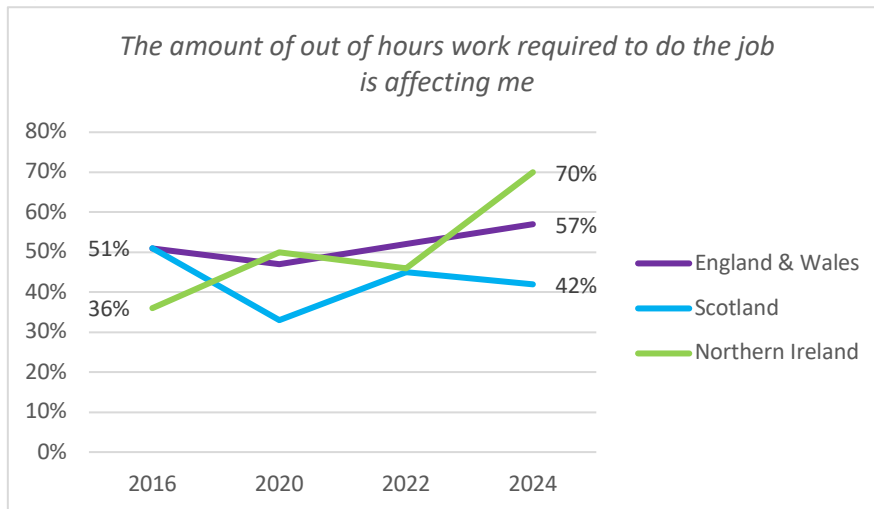
Figure 2.3: Adequacy of pay and pension 2014-2024



Out of hours work

Over the last 10 years there has been an increase in the proportion of salaried judges in England & Wales and Northern Ireland who are affected by the amount of out of hours work required to fulfil their judicial role. This has risen sharply in Northern Ireland from only 36% in 2014 to 70% in 2024. In contrast, in Scotland the proportion of judges affected by out of hours work fell from 51% in 2014 to 42% in a decade later in 2024.

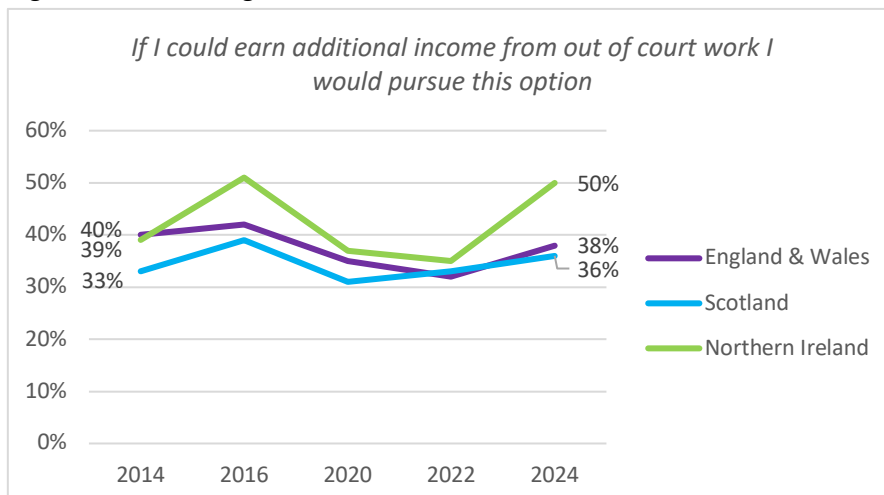
Figure 2.4: Amount of out of hours work 2014-2024



Possibility of outside earnings

Salaried judges are prohibited from earning income from almost all non-judicial work. The proportion of salaried judges in England & Wales and Scotland that said they would pursue out of court income if this were possible has remained fairly constant over the decade at just over a third. In Northern Ireland the proportion of judges that would pursue non-judicial work if this was allowed has increased from 40% in 2014 to 50% a decade later in 2024.

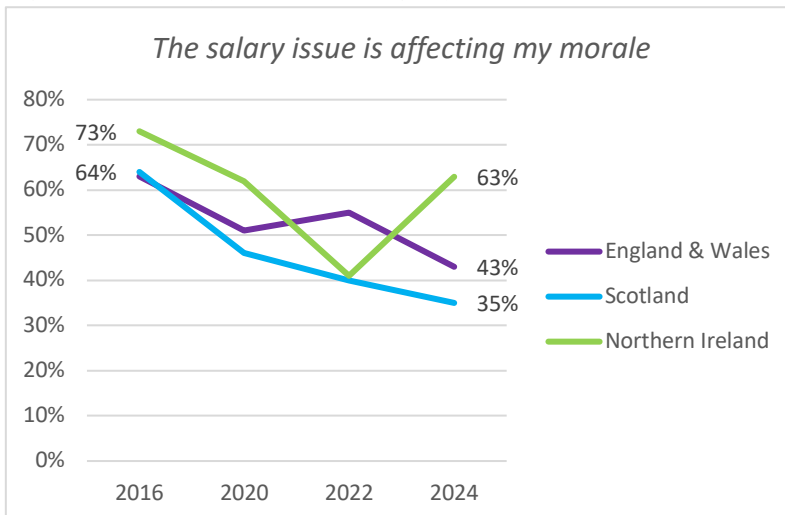
Figure 2.5: Pursuing out of court work 2014-2024



Effect of salary issue on morale

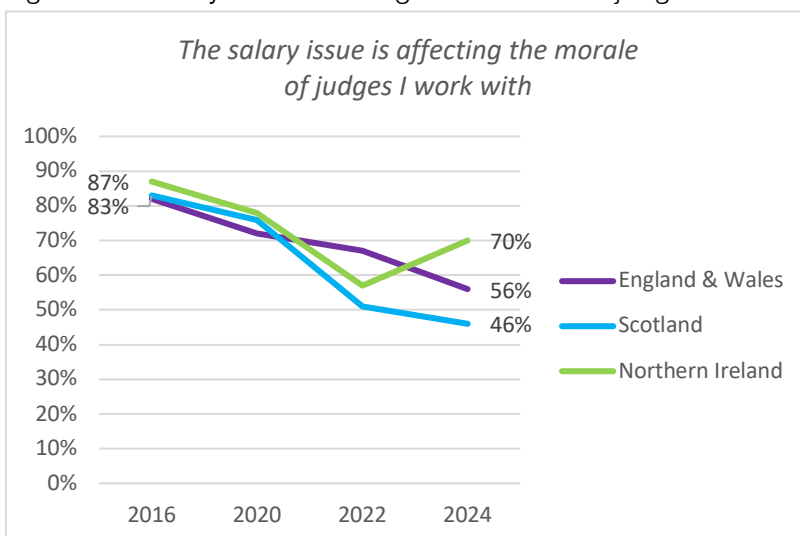
Ten years ago, a majority of all salaried judges in all 3 jurisdictions said that the salary issue was affecting their morale. Over the decade these proportions fell to under half in England & Wales and Scotland. But in Northern Ireland a majority of salaried judges continue to say that the salary issue is affecting their morale, which reflects a sharp increase in judges expressing this view from 2022 to 2024.

Figure 2.6: Salary issue affecting my own morale 2014-2024



Ten years ago, almost all salaried judges in all 3 jurisdictions said that the salary issue was affecting the morale of the judges with whom they work. While the proportion of judges expressing this view has decreased over the decade in all 3 jurisdictions, a majority of judges in England & Wales and Northern Ireland in 2024 and just under half of salaried judges in Scotland continue to express this view in 2024.

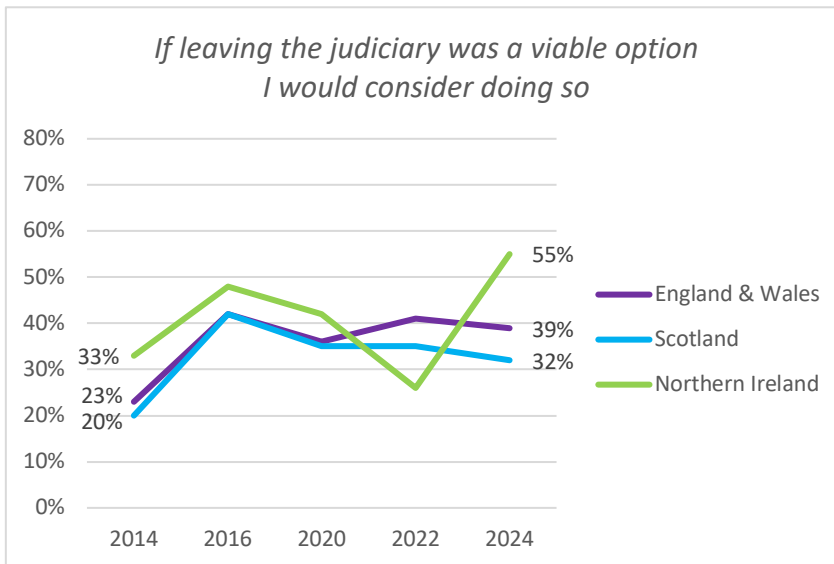
Figure 2.7: Salary issue affecting morale of other judges 2014-2024



Retention

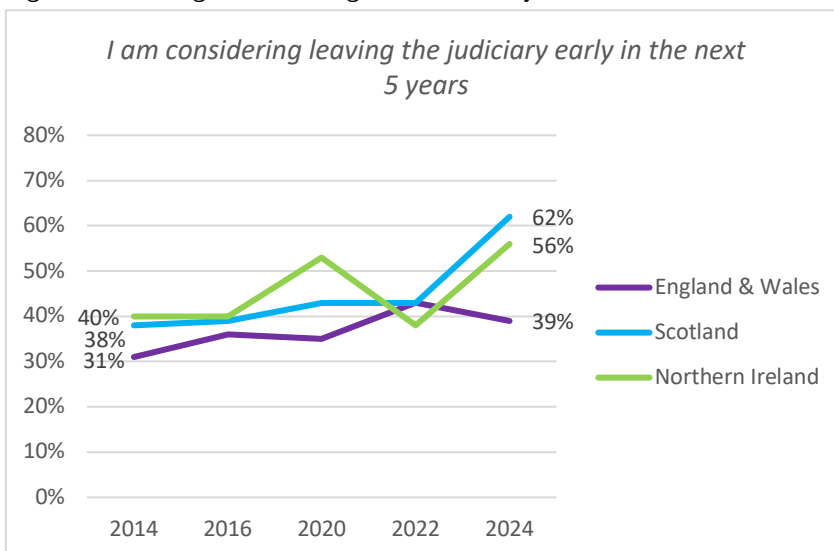
In 2014 only a minority of salaried judges in all 3 UK jurisdictions said that if leaving the judiciary was a viable option they would consider doing so. Over the decade the proportion increased in all 3 jurisdictions. In 2024 it remains a minority in England & Wales and Scotland, but is now over half of all salaried judges in Northern Ireland.

Figure 2.8: Leaving judiciary if viable option 2014-2024



Ten years ago only a minority of salaried judges in all 3 UK jurisdictions were planning to leave the judiciary early within 5 years. Over the decade the proportions increased in all 3 jurisdictions, and while it remains in minority in England & Wales, a majority of salaried judges in both Scotland and Northern Ireland are planning to leave early in the next 5 years.

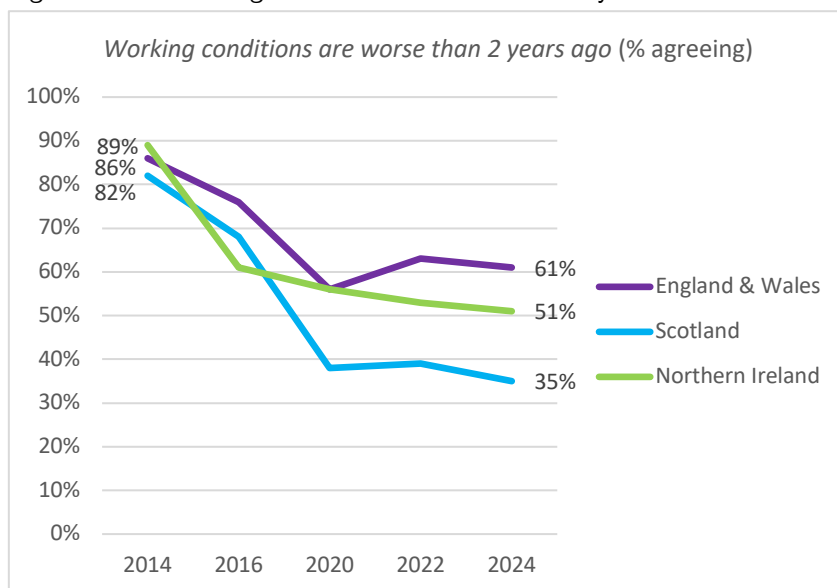
Figure 2.9: Judges intending to leave early 2014-2024



Working conditions

Ten years ago almost all judges in all 3 UK jurisdictions said their working conditions were worse than 5 years ago (the original question). From 2014 to 2020 this declined, but since 2020 judges in England & Wales have increasingly said their working conditions have deteriorated with 61% now saying working conditions are worse than 2 years ago. A majority of judges in Northern Ireland (51%) still say their working conditions are continuing to deteriorate, but in Scotland this is now only a minority of judges (35%).

Figure 2.10: Working conditions worse in last 2 years 2014-2024



Part III: 2024 Judicial Attitude Survey Results for Northern Ireland

The remainder of this report provides results of the 2024 JAS for members of the judiciary in Northern Ireland.

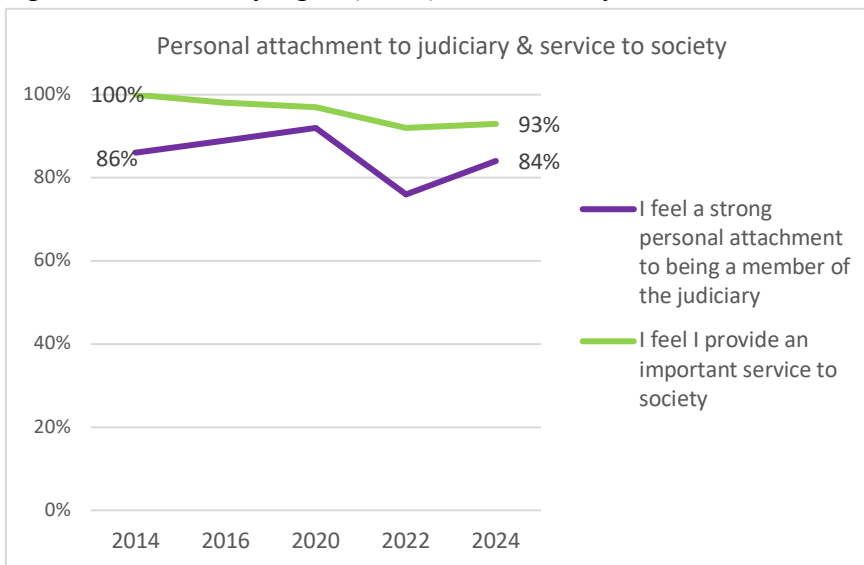
Chapter 3 Being a member of the judiciary

This chapter covers judges' personal attachment to being a member of the judiciary, their belief in their contribution to society, their perception of societal respect for the judiciary and the extent to which judges in Northern Ireland feel valued by different groups in society.

Trends about being a judge 2014 - 2024

From 2014 to 2024, almost every salaried judge has consistently said they feel they provide an important service to society (100% in 2014 and 93% in 2024). In the same decade almost all salaried judges have consistently said they feel a strong personal attachment to being a member of the judiciary. This has fluctuated over the 10 years, but is almost the same in 2024 (84%) as it was in 2014 (86%).

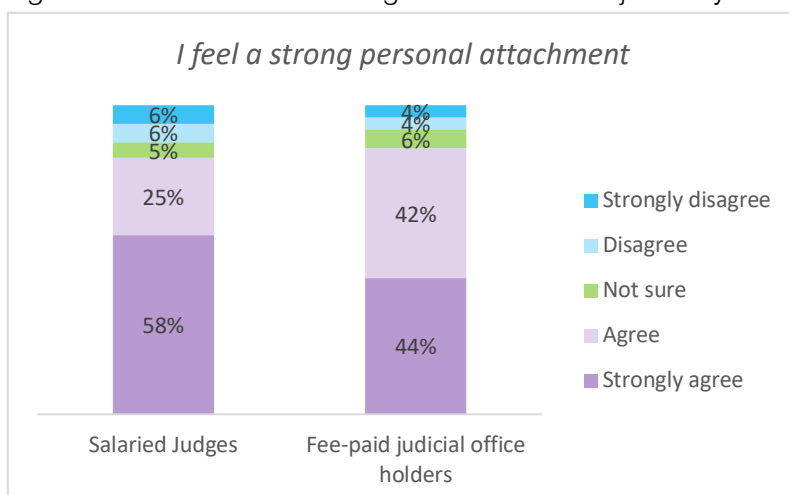
Figure 3.1: Salaried judges' perceptions of their judicial role 2014-2024



Service to society and attachment to being a member of the judiciary

In 2024 there was very little difference between the salaried and fee-paid judiciaries' views on being a member of the judiciary. Almost all judges (84% of salaried and 86% of fee-paid) feel a strong personal attachment to being a member of the judiciary. But a larger proportion of salaried judges felt this attachment strongly (58%) than fee-paid judicial office holders (44%).

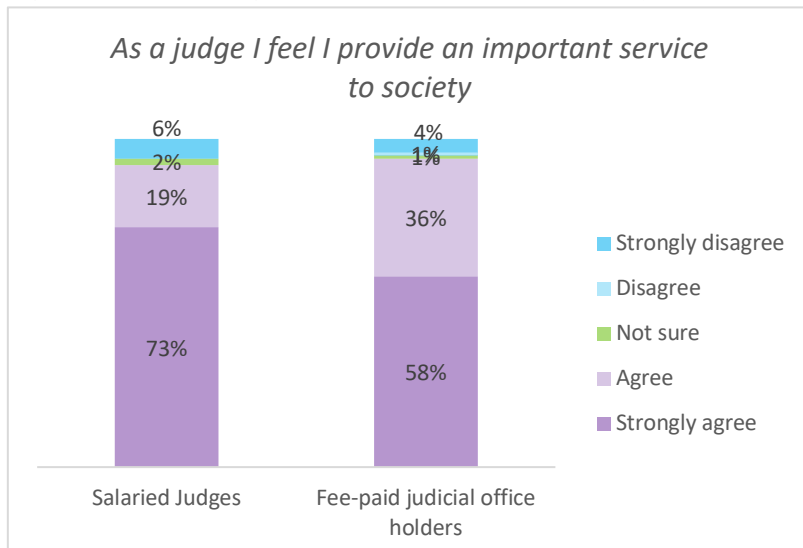
Figure 3.2: Attachment to being a member of the judiciary



Service to society

There was little difference between the salaried and fee-paid judiciaries' views on the extent to which they provide an important service to society: 92% of the salaried and 94% of the fee-paid judiciary feel they provide an important service to society. But a larger proportion of salaried judges felt this strongly (73%) compared to fee-paid judicial office holders (58%).

Figure 3.3: Providing an important service to society

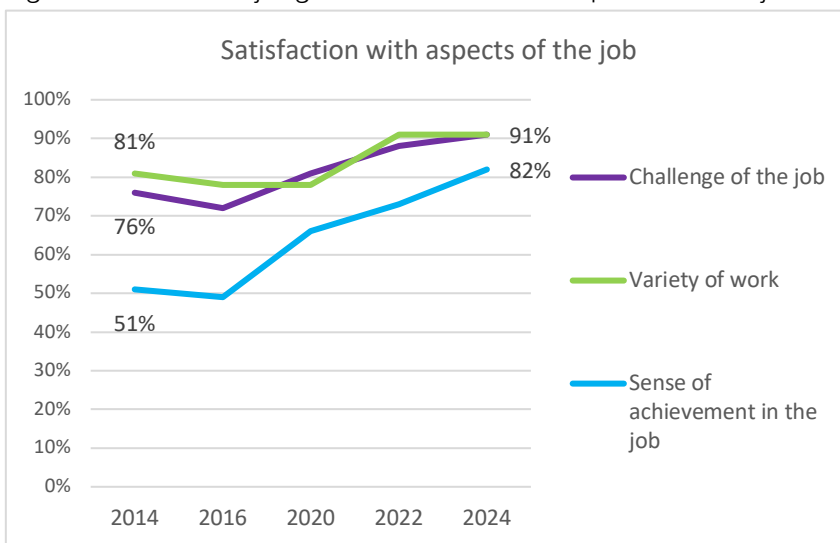


Job satisfaction

Trends for salaried judges 2014-2024

From 2014 to 2024, most salaried judges have consistently felt satisfied with the challenge of the job, the variety of work they have and the sense of achievement they have in their job. In all three areas judicial satisfaction levels have increased over the decade. The most marked increase is in judges' sense of achievement in their work, which rose 31 percentage points from 51% to 82%. Satisfaction with the challenge of the job also increased 25 percentage points from 76% to 91%.

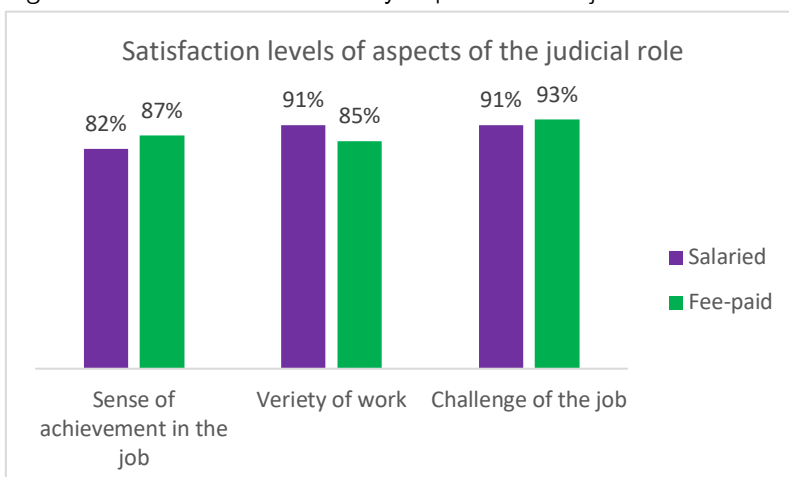
Figure 3.4: Salaried judges' satisfaction with aspects of their job 2014-24



Job satisfaction 2024

In 2024 both salaried and fee-paid officer holders continued to have very high satisfaction levels with key aspects of their job: sense of achievement, challenge and variety of work.

Figure 3.5: Satisfaction with key aspects of the judicial role

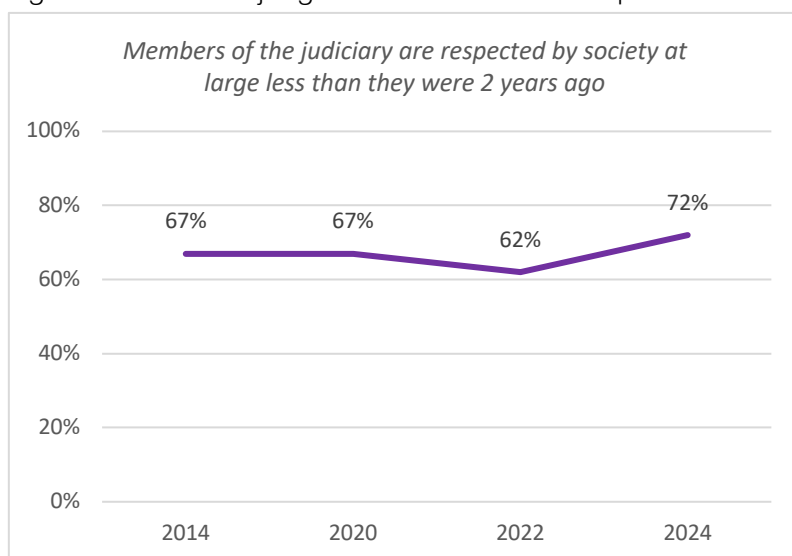


Societal respect

Trends for salaried judges 2014-2024

The extent to which salaried judges feel respected by society has not changed substantially since 2014, although the proportion of judges saying they are respected less than in previous years has increased. At the start of the decade 67% of judges said that members of the judiciary were respected less than they were in the previous 2 years, and a decade later 72% of judges said the same thing.

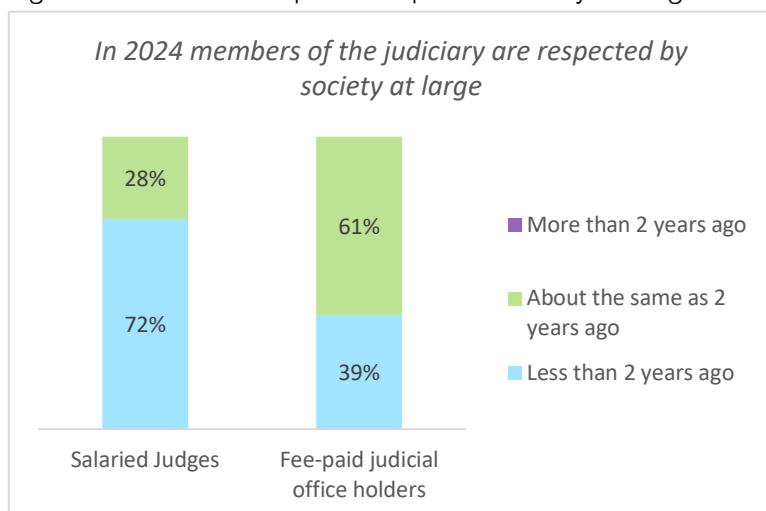
Figure 3.6: Salaried judges' views on societal respect



Societal respect in 2024

A much larger proportion of salaried judges (72%) than fee-paid office holders (39%) felt that members of the judiciary in 2024 were respected by society less than they were in 2022.

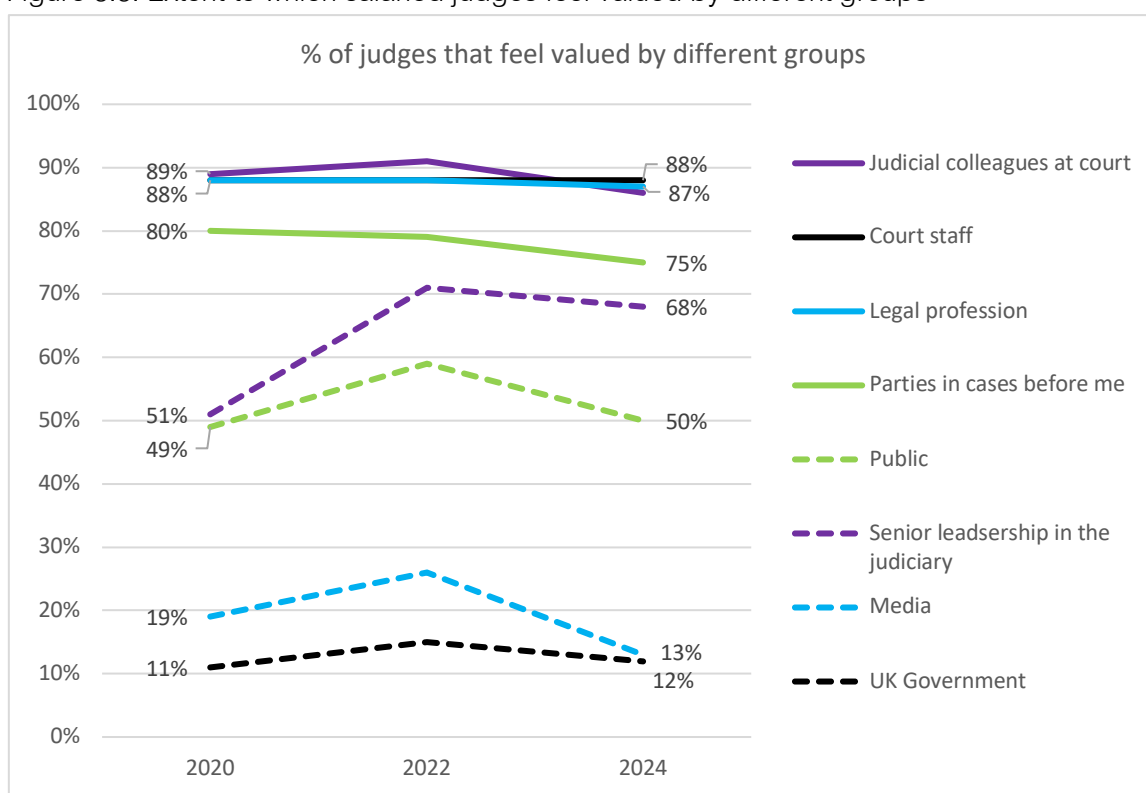
Figure 3.7: Societal respect compared with 2 years ago



Trends in feeling valued 2020-2024

Since 2020, all salaried judges have been asked the extent to which they felt valued by a number of different groups¹³. There has been no change from 2020 to 2024 in the groups salaried judges feel most and least valued by. Judicial colleagues, court staff, the legal profession and parties in cases before judges are the groups salaried judges consistently feel most valued by. A majority of judges also feel valued by the public and senior judicial leadership, and the extent to which judges feel valued by the senior leadership in the judiciary in Northern Ireland has increased from 2014 (51%) to 2024 (68%). The media and the UK government are the groups most salaried judges do not feel valued by.

Figure 3.8: Extent to which salaried judges feel valued by different groups



Feeling valued 2024

In 2024, the results for salaried and fee-paid judiciaries were largely identical. Most of both the salaried and fee paid judiciary felt valued by judicial colleagues, court staff, the legal profession, parties in cases before them, the public and senior leadership in the judiciary. Very few felt valued by the media, the UK government or the Northern Ireland Executive (2024 was the first time judges were asked about being valued by the NI Executive).

¹³ In 2014 and 2016 judges were only asked if they felt valued by these groups (not the extent to which they felt valued), so direct comparisons with 2014 and 2016 are not possible.

Figure 3.9: Extent to which salaried judges feel valued by different groups

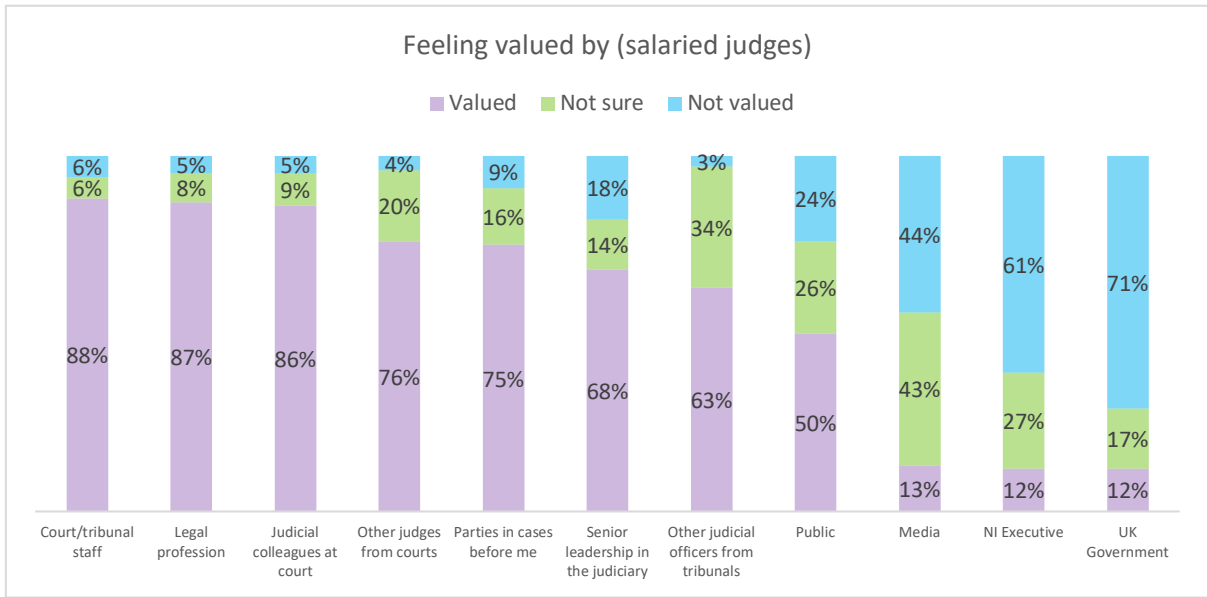
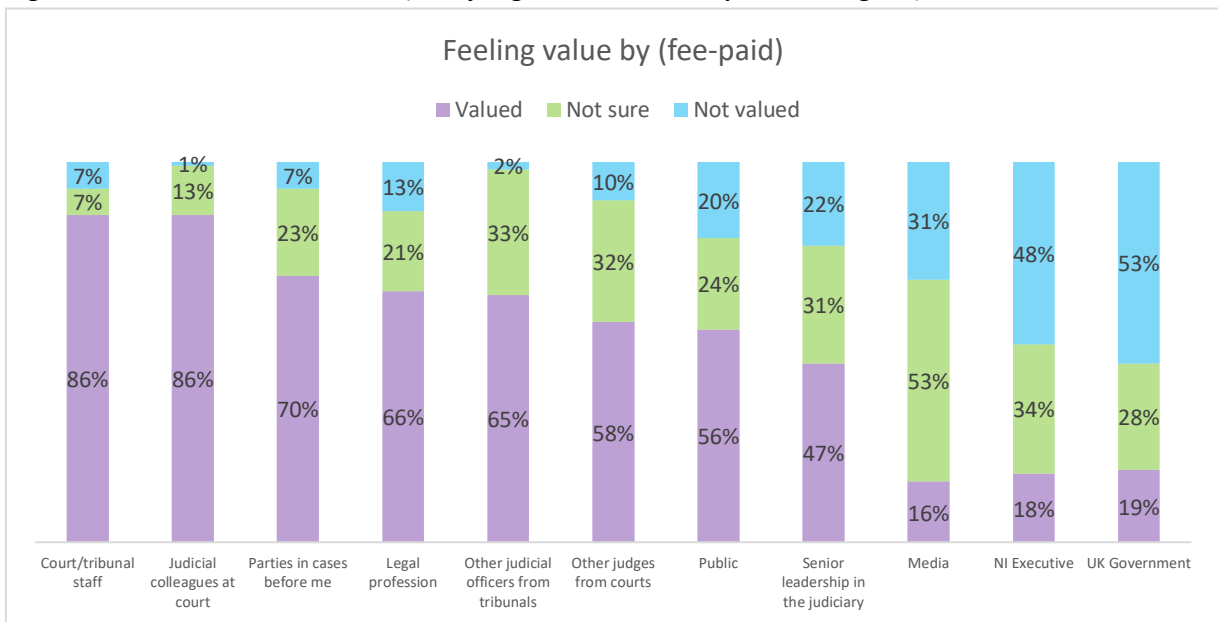


Figure 3.10: Extent to which fee-paid judges feel valued by different groups



Chapter 4 Working Conditions

This chapter covers the experiences and views of both the salaried and fee-paid judiciaries in Northern Ireland on overall working conditions in the last two years, their caseload, any non-case workload, building conditions, judicial space, staff support and morale.

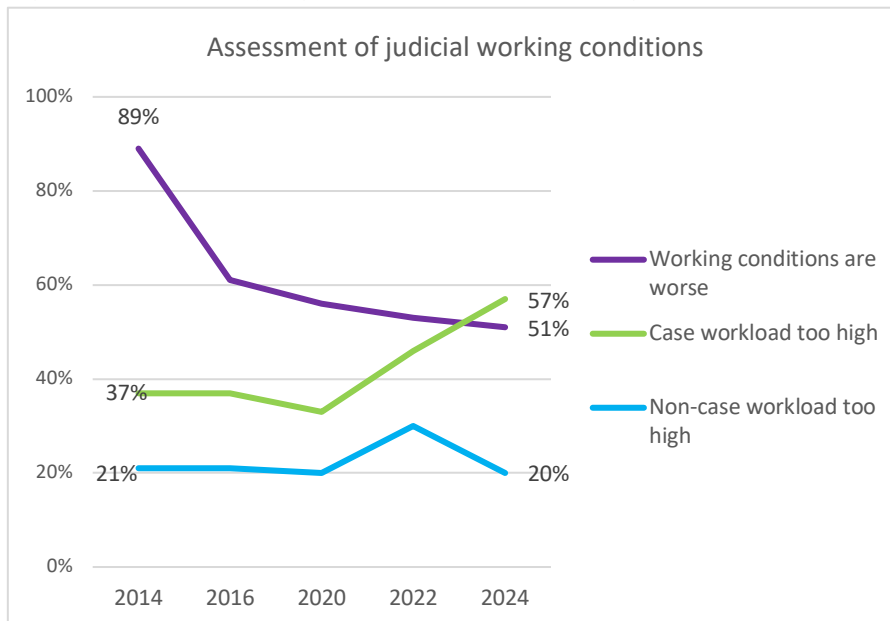
Working conditions trends for the salaried judiciary (2014-2024)

Overall working conditions compared with previous years: Over the decade the proportion of salaried judges saying their working conditions are worse than they were in the previous 2 years has fallen sharply from 89% in 2014 to 51% in 2024, although this is still a majority of judges.

Case workload: Over the decade there has been an increase in the proportion of salaried judges who say their case workload is too high, from 37% in 2014 to 57% in 2024.

Non-case workload: The small proportion of judges saying their non-case workload is too high is almost the same in 2024 (20%) as it was in 2014 (21%).

Figure 4.1: Salaried judges' assessment of working conditions 2014-2024



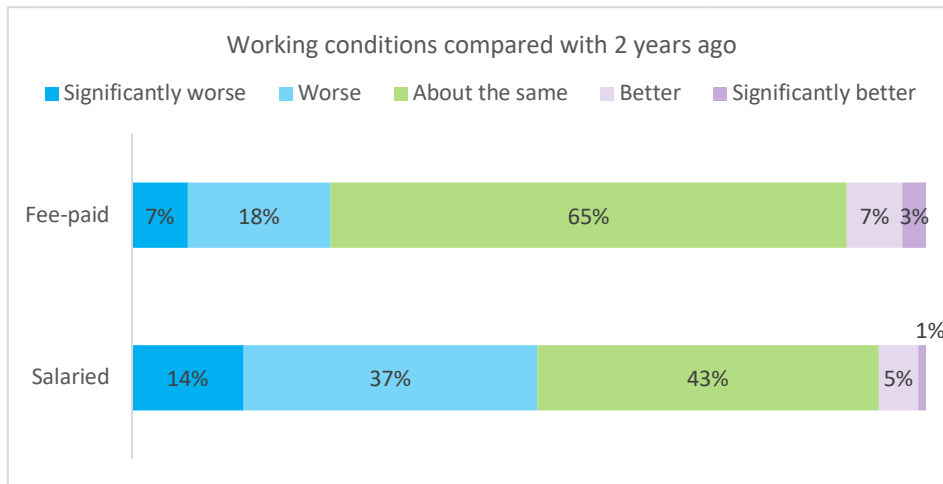
2024 Working conditions

This section covers judicial assessment of working conditions in 2024 in general in Northern Ireland as well as a range of specific working conditions such as case and non-case workload, administrative support, court staff morale, physical working conditions and security.

Overall working conditions compared with 2 years ago

Over half (51%) of salaried judges in Northern Ireland said that their overall working conditions were worse in 2024 than they were in 2022, while only a quarter (25%) of fee-paid judicial office holders felt working conditions were worse in 2024. A minority (14%) of salaried judges said working conditions were significantly worse in 2024, but this was much higher than fee-paid office holders (7%).

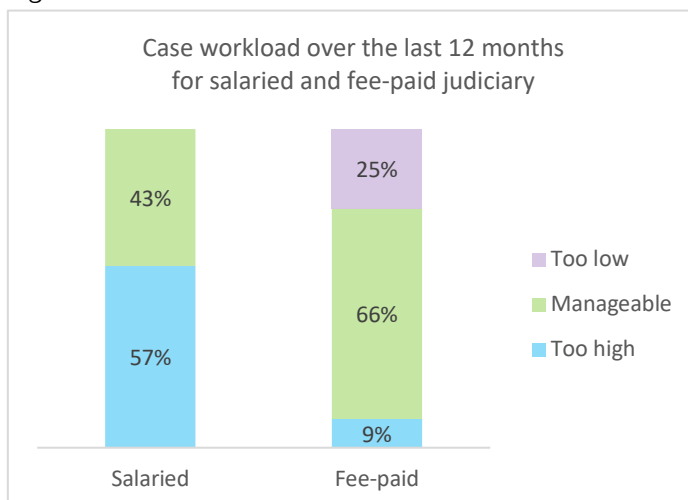
Figure 4.2: Working conditions compared with 2 years ago (detailed)



Case workload for salaried and fee-paid judiciary

While a majority of salaried judges (57%) said their case workload over the last 12 months was too high most fee-paid office holders (66%) said their case workload was manageable and a quarter (25%) said it was too low.

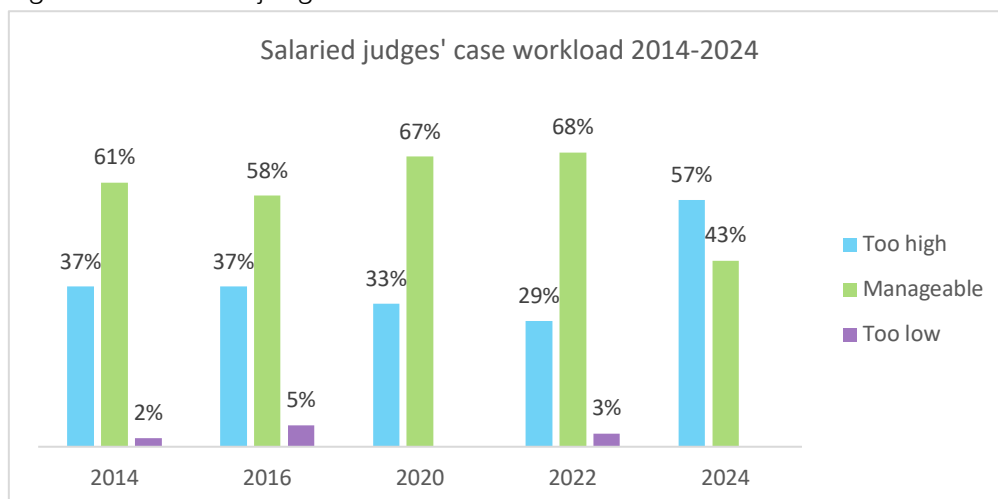
Figure 4.3: Case workload in last 12 months



Trends in salaried judges' case workload 2014-2024

Over eight years from 2014 to 2022, only a minority of salaried judges in Northern Ireland said their case workload was too high and this fell steadily from 37% in 2014 to 29% in 2022. But in 2024 there was a major reversal of this trend, with a sharp increase in the proportion of salaried judges that said their case workload was too high – rising to a majority of all salaried judges (57%).

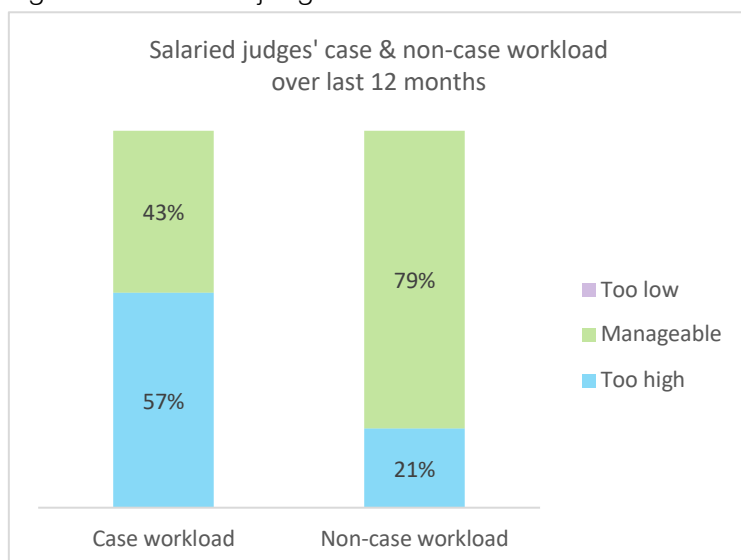
Figure 4.4: Salaried judges' case workload 2014-2024



Salaried judges' case and non-case workload 2024

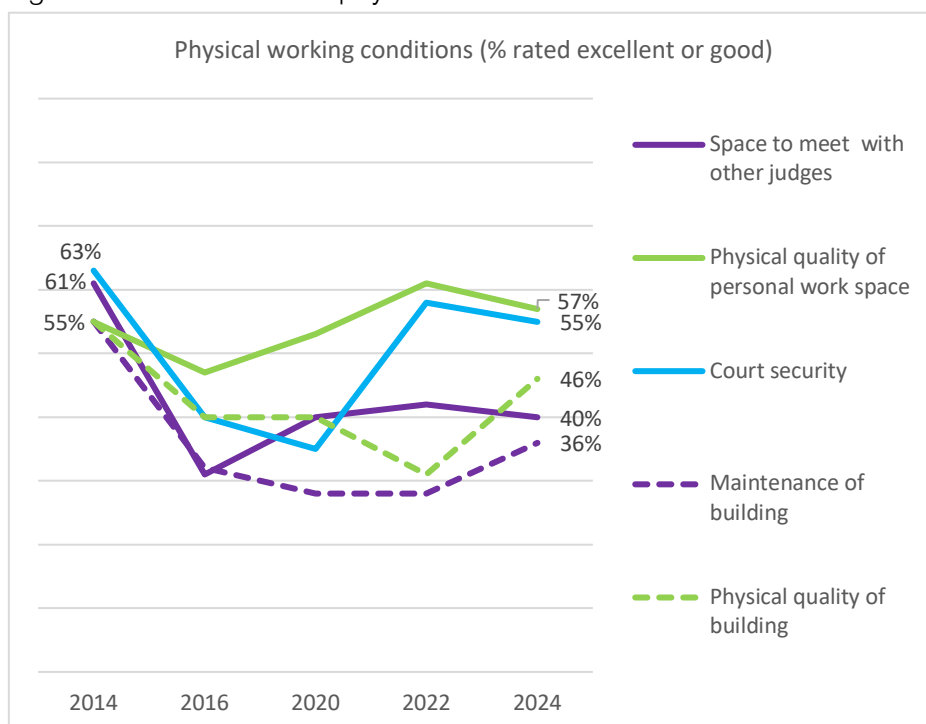
Only salaried judges in Northern Ireland were asked about their non-case workload as fee-paid office holders tend not to have workloads outside of their cases. Just over half of salaried judges (57%) said their case workload over the last 12 months was too high, while a majority (79%) said their workload that does not include their case work was manageable.

Figure 4.5: Salaried judges' case & non-case workload over last 12 months



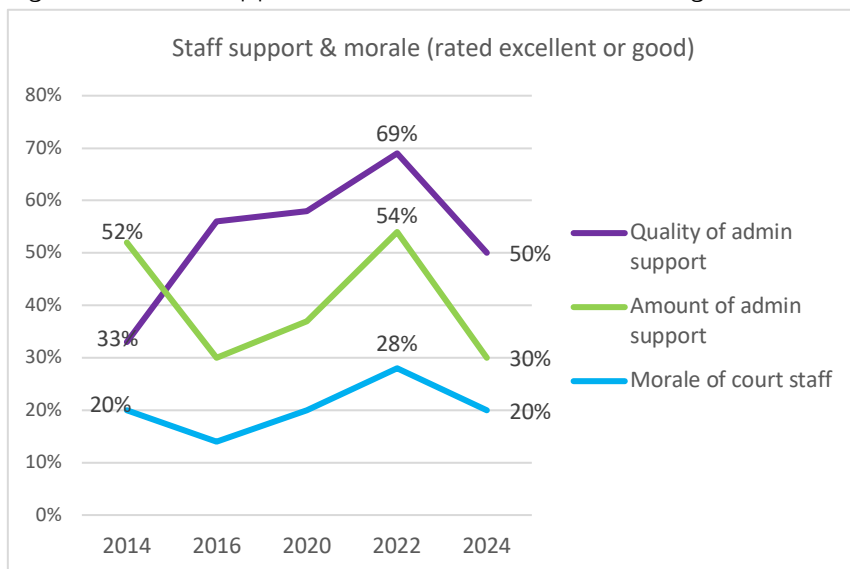
Building conditions and space: Over the last decade, all building and space conditions in Northern Ireland rated excellent or good by salaried judges have declined except for one: the physical quality of judges' personal work space (55% of judges rated it as excellent or good in 2014 and 57% did so again in 2024). The ratings for the physical quality of the buildings in which judges work and court security declined from 2014 to 2024, but the largest falls were for the space judges have to meet and interact with other judges (61% rated it excellent or good in 2014 but only 40% did so in 2024) and the maintenance of the court buildings (55% rated it excellent or good in 2014 but only 36% did so in 2024).

Figure 4.6: Assessment of physical conditions 2014-2024



Staff support and morale: Judges' assessment of the amount of administrative support available to them has fallen substantially over the last decade. In 2014 just over half (52%) of salaried judges rated the amount of administrative support they received as excellent or good but only 30% did so in 2024. Judges' assessment of the quality of administrative support has fallen sharply in the last two years, from 69% rating it excellent or good in 2022 to only 50% in 2024. Staff morale, which has the lowest proportion of judges saying it was excellent or good over the entire 10 year period, also fell from 28% in 2022 to 20% in 2024.

Figure 4.7: Staff support and morale rated excellent or good 2014-24

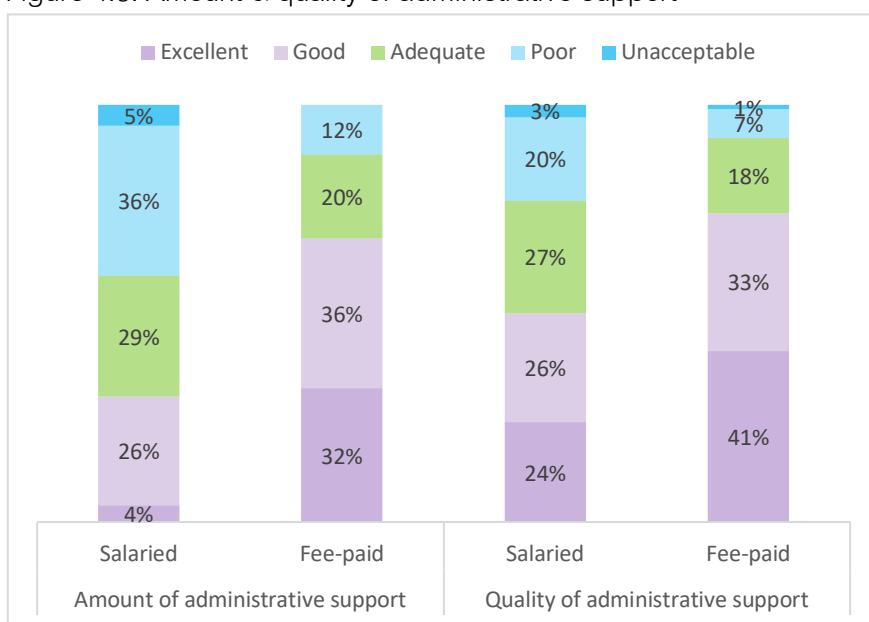


Assessment of specific working conditions 2024 (salaried and fee-paid judges compared)

Amount and quality of administrative support

Fee-paid judicial office holders in Northern Ireland rated the amount and quality of administrative support higher than salaried judges. Only 30% of salaried judges said the amount of administrative support they received is excellent or good, compared with 58% of fee-paid office holders. And while 50% of salaried judges said the quality of administrative support they received was excellent or good, 74% of fee-paid office holders said it was excellent or good.

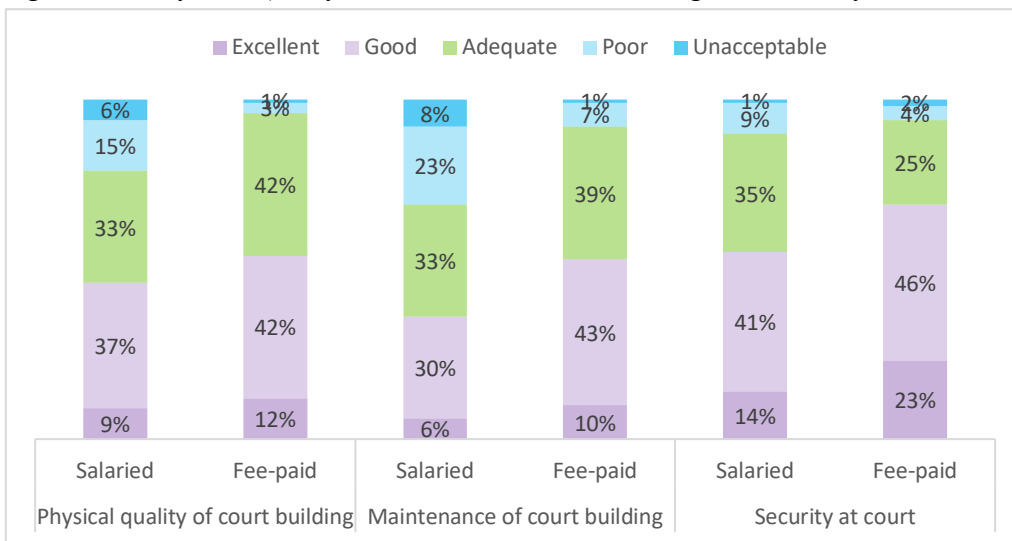
Figure 4.8: Amount & quality of administrative support



Physical quality, maintenance and security at court and tribunal buildings

Fee-paid judicial office holders rated the physical quality, maintenance and security of their main court or tribunal buildings higher than salaried judges. A majority of fee-paid office holders rated these 3 aspects of their working conditions as excellent or good, while only a minority of salaried judges rated the physical quality and maintenance of their courts/tribunals as excellent or good. A larger proportion of fee-paid office holders (69%) rated security at their buildings as excellent or good than salaried judges (55%).

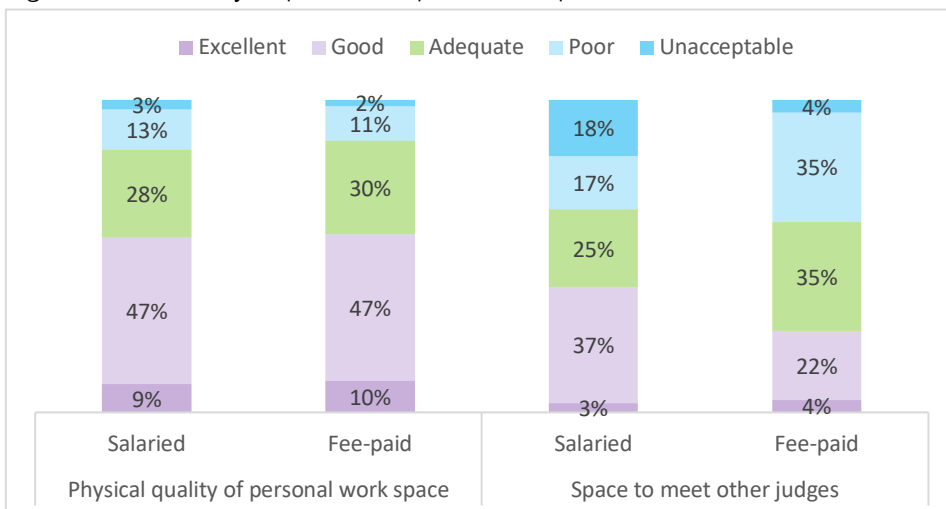
Figure 4.9: Physical quality and maintenance of building and security at court



Physical quality of personal work space, space to meet other members of the judiciary

The salaried and fee-paid judiciary had very similar ratings for the physical quality of their personal work space, with just over half of both saying it was excellent or good. More salaried judges (40%) than fee-paid (26%) said the space to meet other judges was excellent or good.

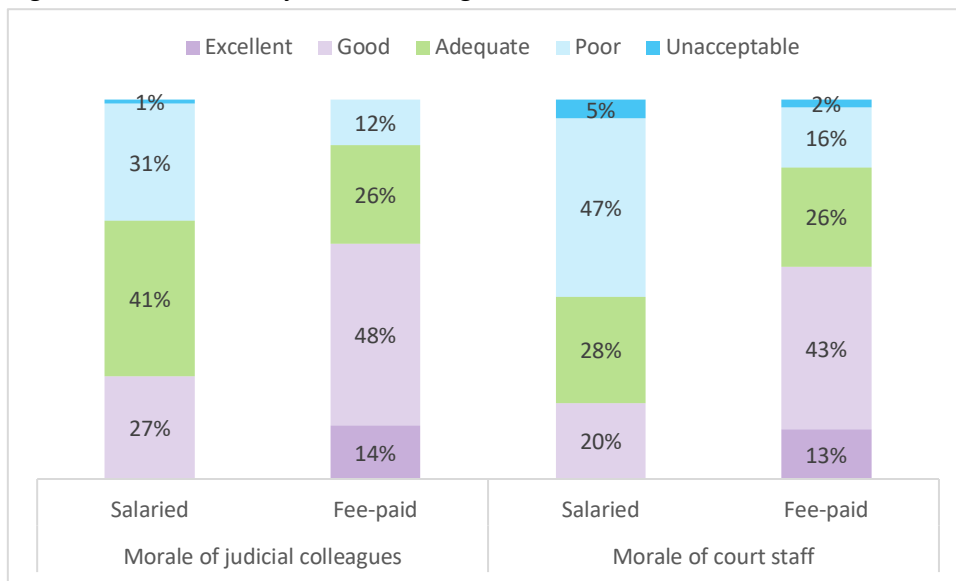
Figure 4.10: Quality of personal space and space to meet



Morale of judicial colleagues and court staff

There were very different views of judicial morale and court staff morale between the salaried and fee-paid judiciary. Only a quarter (27%) of salaried judges said the morale of their judicial colleagues was excellent or good and 32% said it was poor or unacceptable; in contrast, 62% of fee-paid office holders said the morale of their colleagues was excellent or good. Only 20% of salaried judges said court staff morale was excellent or good and 52% said it was poor or unacceptable; in contrast, 56% of fee-paid office holders said it was excellent or good.

Figure 4.11: Morale of judicial colleagues and court staff



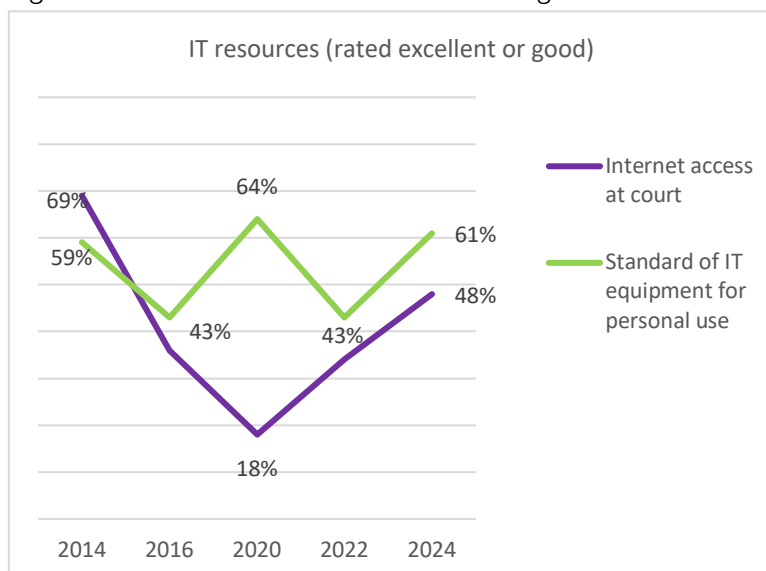
Chapter 5 Judicial IT & Digital Working

This chapter covers the availability and quality of IT resources and IT support at courts and tribunals in Northern Ireland, as well as the use of remote hearings. It should be noted that these resources and support are provided by the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service not the judiciary.

IT resources trends 2014-2024

Both the quality of internet access at court and the standard of IT equipment provided to judges for their personal use in Northern Ireland have fluctuated substantially over the decade. The largest fluctuation has been in the proportion of judges rating internet access as excellent or good; 69% rated it highly in 2014 but this fell sharply to 18% in 2020 and has now increased to 48% in 2024, although this is still a minority of the judiciary. The IT equipment for judges' personal use rated excellent or good also fluctuated throughout the decade and is now at 61% in 2024.

Figure 5.1: IT resources rated excellent or good 2014-2024



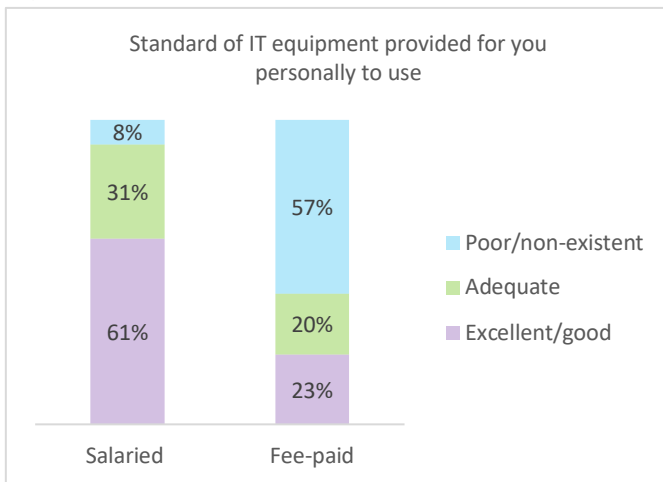
IT resources and support 2024

In 2024 all salaried and fee-paid office holders were asked to assess the IT resources and support they receive in carrying out their judicial responsibilities.

Standard of IT equipment for personal use

While a majority of salaried judges (61%) said the standard of IT equipment they have been given for their personal use was excellent or good, 57% of fee-paid office holders said it was poor or non-existent.

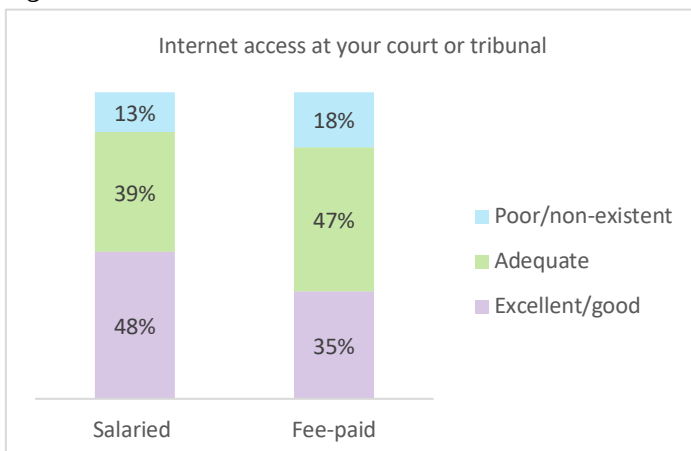
Figure 5.2: Standard of IT equipment for personal use



Internet access at courts and tribunals

Less than half of salaried judges (48%) and only a third of fee-paid office holders (35%) said the internet access at their court was excellent or good.

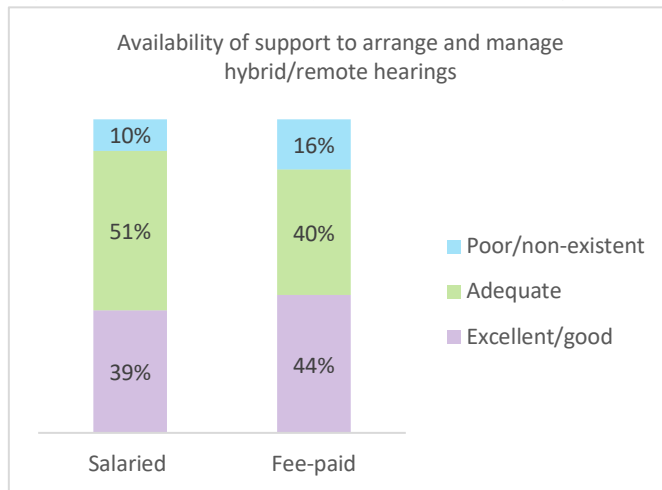
Figure 5.3: Internet access



Availability of support to arrange and manage hybrid/remote hearings

Only a minority of both salaried (39%) and fee-paid judicial office holders (44%) said that the availability of support to arrange and manage hybrid/remote hearings was excellent or good.

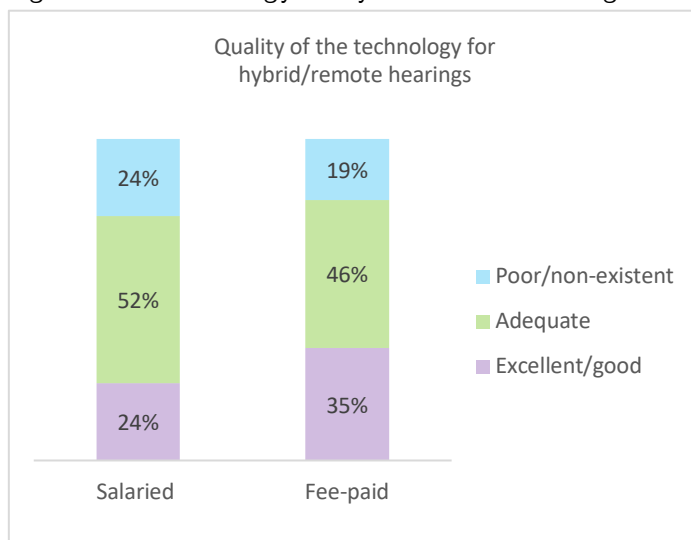
Figure 5.4: Support for hybrid/remote hearings



Quality of the technology for hybrid/remote hearings

Only a minority of both salaried (24%) and fee-paid judicial office holders (35%) said that the quality of the technology for hybrid/remote hearings was excellent or good. For both groups the largest proportion said it was adequate.

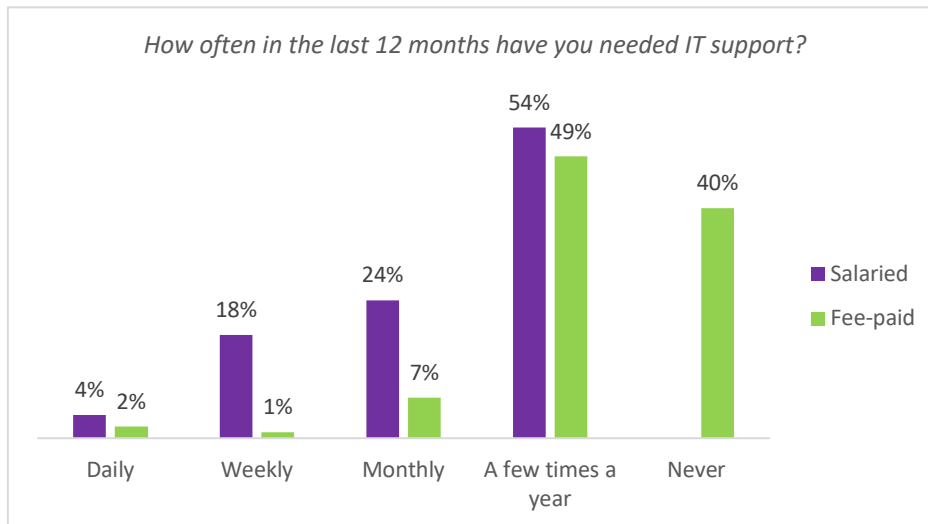
Figure 5.5: Technology for hybrid/remote hearings



Frequency of needing IT support

A majority of judges (both salaried and fee-paid) needed IT support not more than a few times a year over the last 12 months. But for salaried judges, 42% needed IT support on a monthly basis (24%) or weekly basis (18%).

Figure 5.6: Need for IT support in the last 12 months



Technical support

While just over half of salaried judges (51%) said the **quality** of technical support was excellent or good, only a minority of fee-paid officeholders rated it excellent or good. When it came to the **availability** of technical support and the **speed** of the technical support once it was requested, in both instances only a minority of salaried and fee-paid judges rated them as excellent or good.

Figure 5.7: Quality of technical support

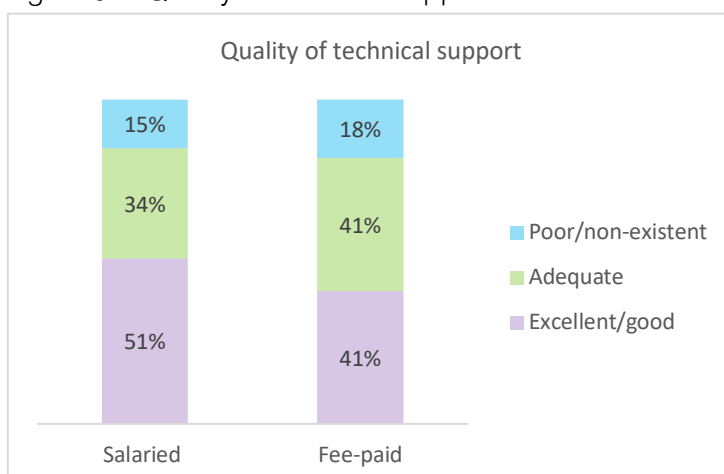


Figure 5.8: Availability of technical support

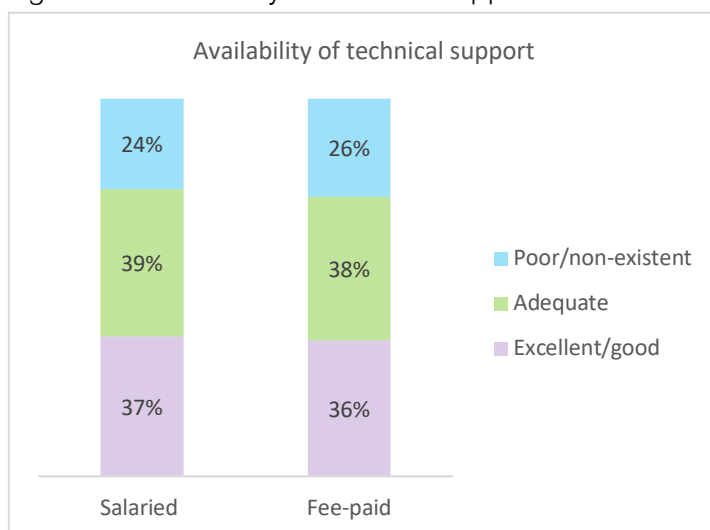
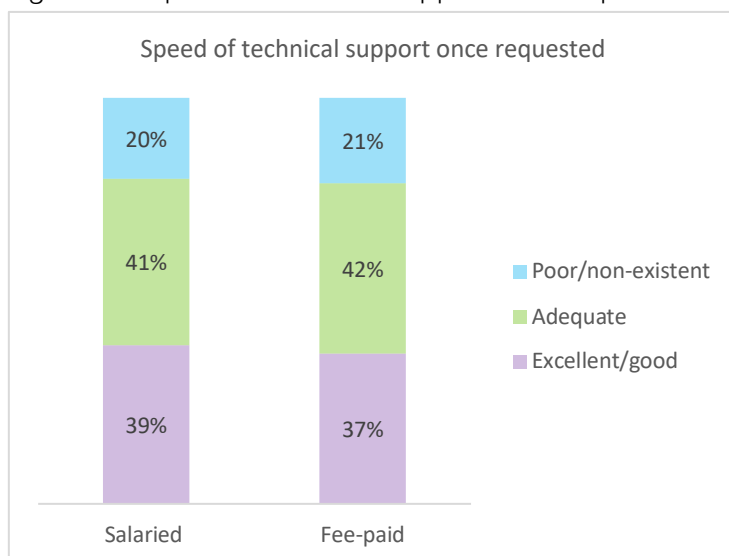


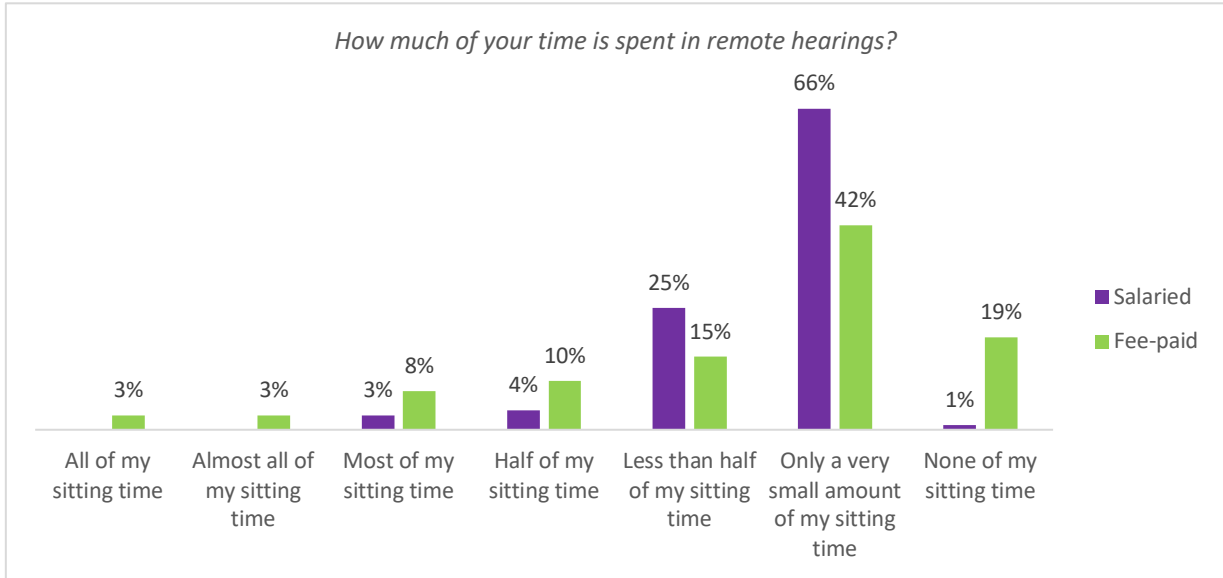
Figure 5.9: Speed of technical support once requested



Time spent in remote hearings

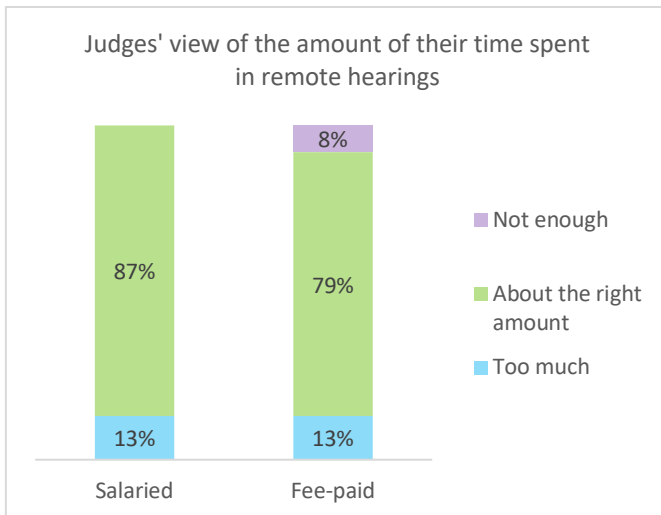
Almost all (91%) salaried judges said that they were spending either only a very small amount of their time or less than half their time in remote hearings, whereas a quarter of fee-paid office holders said they are spending half or more of their time in remote hearings.

Figure 5.10: Time spent in remote hearings



All salaried and fee-paid judiciary were also asked: *How would you assess the amount of your sitting time spent in remote hearings?* The majority of salaried and fee-paid judges said that they were spending about the right amount of time in remote hearings.

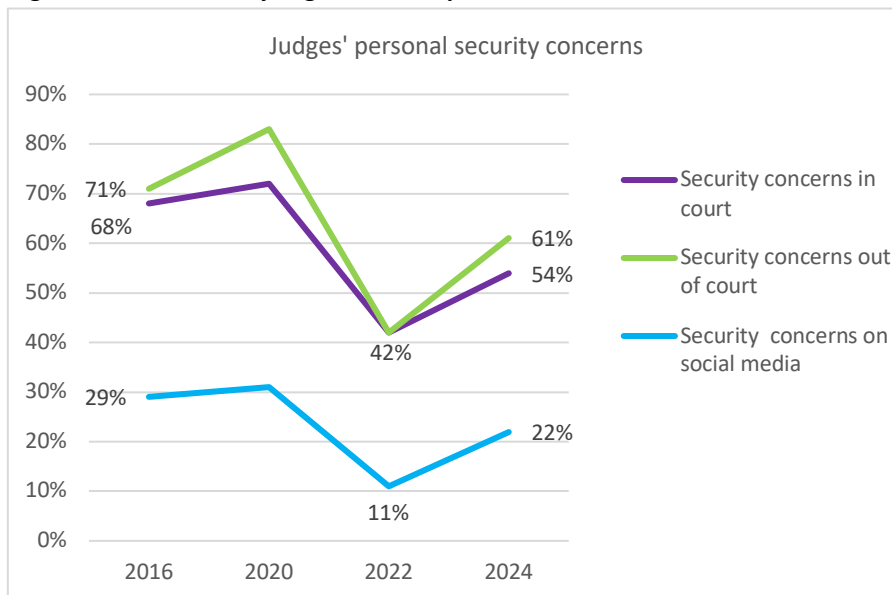
Figure 5.11: Assessment of time in remote hearings



Trends in personal security concerns 2014-2024

Since 2016 when salaried judges were first asked about their concerns for their personal security, judges' views have fluctuated. The largest fluctuation was from 2020 to 2022 when judges' personal security concerns in court, out of court and on social media all decreased; however, this most likely reflected the increased use of remote hearings during the Covid pandemic. Since 2022 this trend has reversed. In the last two years judges' concerns for their personal security in court, out of court and on social media have all increased, and a majority of judges are now concerned for their personal security both in court (54%) and out of court (61%).

Figure 6.1: Extent of judges' security concerns 2016-2024

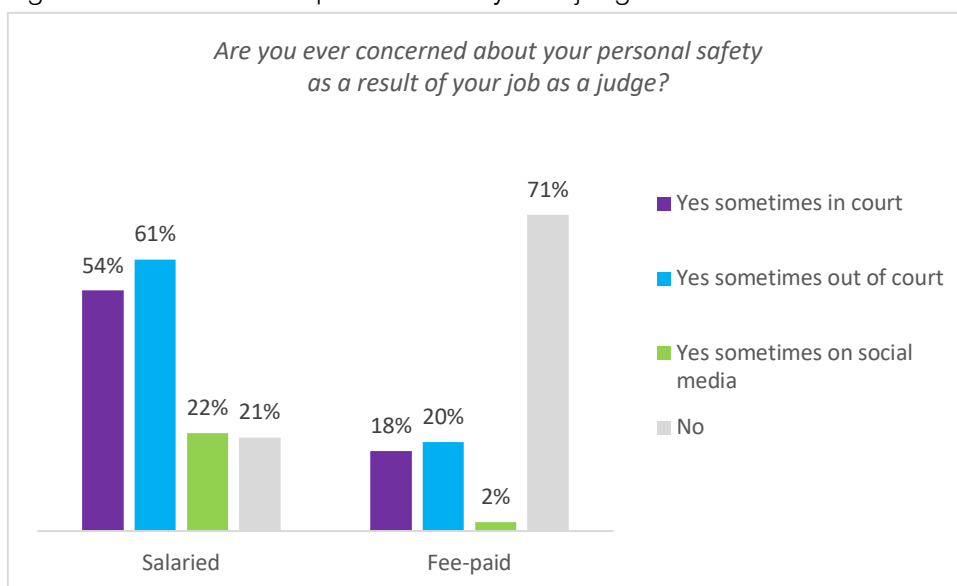


Personal safety concerns 2024

Salaried judges in Northern Ireland expressed much greater concerns for their personal safety as a result of their judicial work compared with fee-paid office holders in Northern Ireland. This may perhaps be a consequence of the greater amount of time salaried judges spend sitting as a judge, but the difference is nonetheless very substantial.

A majority of salaried judges are now concerned about their personal safety both in court (54%) and out of court (61%), with almost a quarter (21%) also concerned about their personal safety online. In contrast, only small proportions of fee-paid office holders in Northern Ireland have concerns about their personal safety in court, out of court and online, and 76% do not have any personal safety concerns.

Figure 6.2: Concerns for personal safety as a judge 2024



Note: Multiple options could be selected

Comparison with Scotland, England & Wales courts and UK Tribunals

While there is a similar trend of increasing personal security concerns amongst judges in all of the other UK jurisdictions, a substantially higher proportion of judges in Northern Ireland have been concerned for their personal security in all three areas over the last decade compared with judges in the other UK jurisdictions (Scotland, England and Wales courts and UK tribunals).

Figure 6.3: UK judges' in-court safety concerns

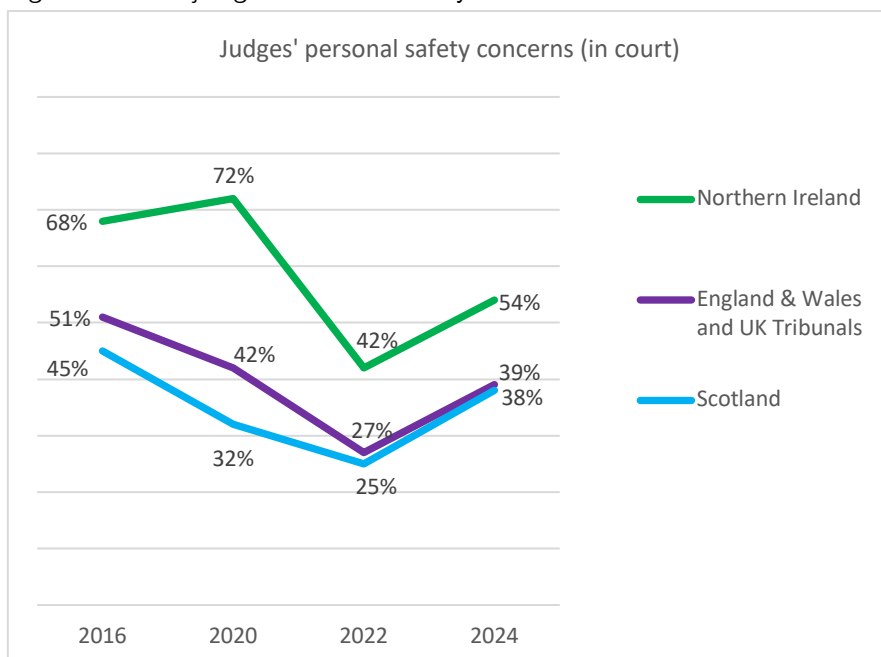


Figure 6.4: UK judges' out of court safety concerns

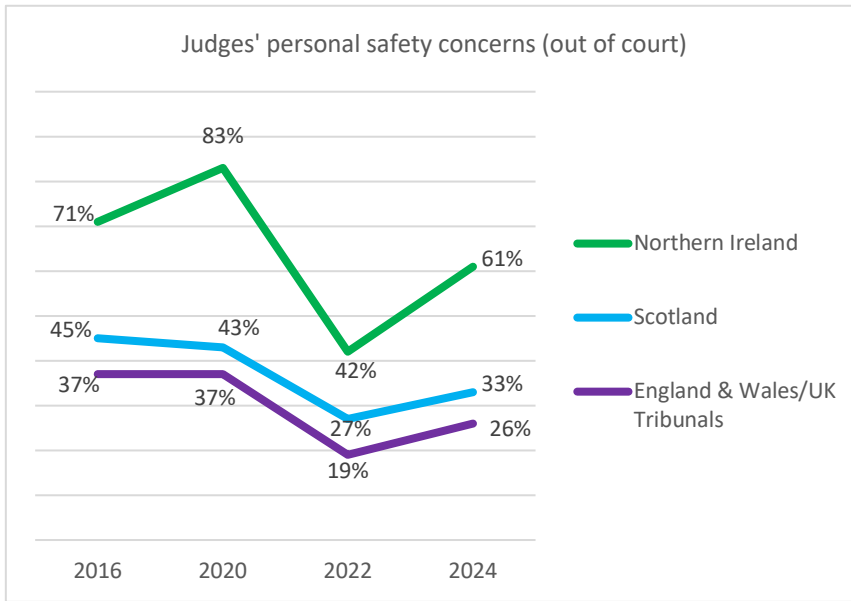
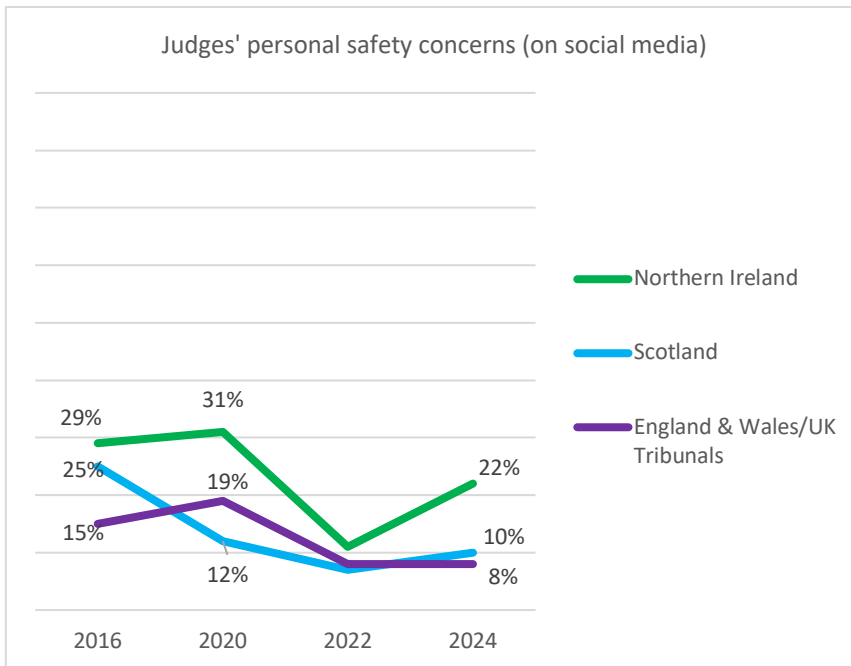


Figure 6.5: UK judges' safety concerns on social media



Overall concerns

Two-thirds (67%) of all salaried judges in Northern Ireland are extremely concerned about loss of respect for the judiciary by the government, 61% are extremely concerned about staff reductions, and a majority are extremely concerned and almost three-quarters are concerned about increase in litigants in person (53%) and personal safety for judges (51%).

Table 6.1: Changes Northern Ireland judges are concerned about (2024)

| <i>To what extent are you concerned about the following changes in the judiciary?</i> | Salaried judges “extremely concerned” |
|---|---|
| Loss of respect for the judiciary by government | 67% |
| Staff reductions | 61% |
| Increase in litigants in person | 53% |
| Personal safety for judges | 51% |
| Attacks on judiciary in media | 49% |
| Financial constraints | 46% |
| Stressful working conditions | 40% |
| Loss of experienced judges | 37% |
| Loss of judicial independence | 36% |
| Low judicial morale | 36% |
| Inability to attract best people to judiciary | 34% |
| Deteriorating conditions at my court building | 27% |
| Court/tribunal closures | 22% |
| Reduction in face-to-face hearings | 19% |

Note: Multiple options could be selected

Chapter 7 Salaried judges: pay, pension and earnings

This chapter deals with remuneration and pensions for salaried judges. Salaried judges have been surveyed in the JAS about their salary and pension since 2014, and this has enabled results of the 2024 JAS to be compared with previous JAS findings on salary and pensions.

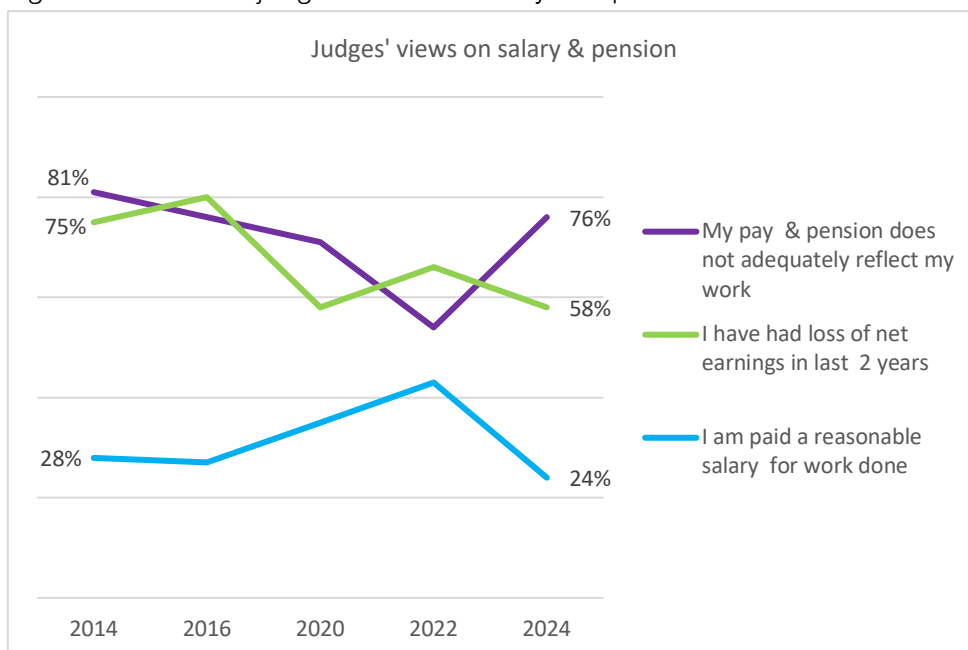
Trends in judges' views on salary and pension (2014-2024)

Over the decade from 2014 to 2024 a majority of judges have said their pay and pension does not adequately reflect the work they have done and will do before retirement. While the proportion of judges holding this view has fluctuated over the decade, in 2024 the proportion (76%) is almost the same as 10 years ago (81%).

Over the decade from 2014 to 2024 a majority of judges have consistently said that they have had a loss of net earnings in the previous 2 years. While the proportion of judges experiencing this has decreased from 75% in 2014 to 58% in 2024, this remains a majority of all salaried judges in Northern Ireland.

Over the same 10 years, only a minority of judges have said they feel they are paid a reasonable salary for the work they do. The proportion of judges who feel they are paid a reasonable salary for the work they do has fluctuated over the decade from only 28% in 2014, rising to 43% in 2022 but falling again in 2024 to a decade low of only 24%.

Figure 7.1: Salaried judges' views on salary and pension 2014-2024



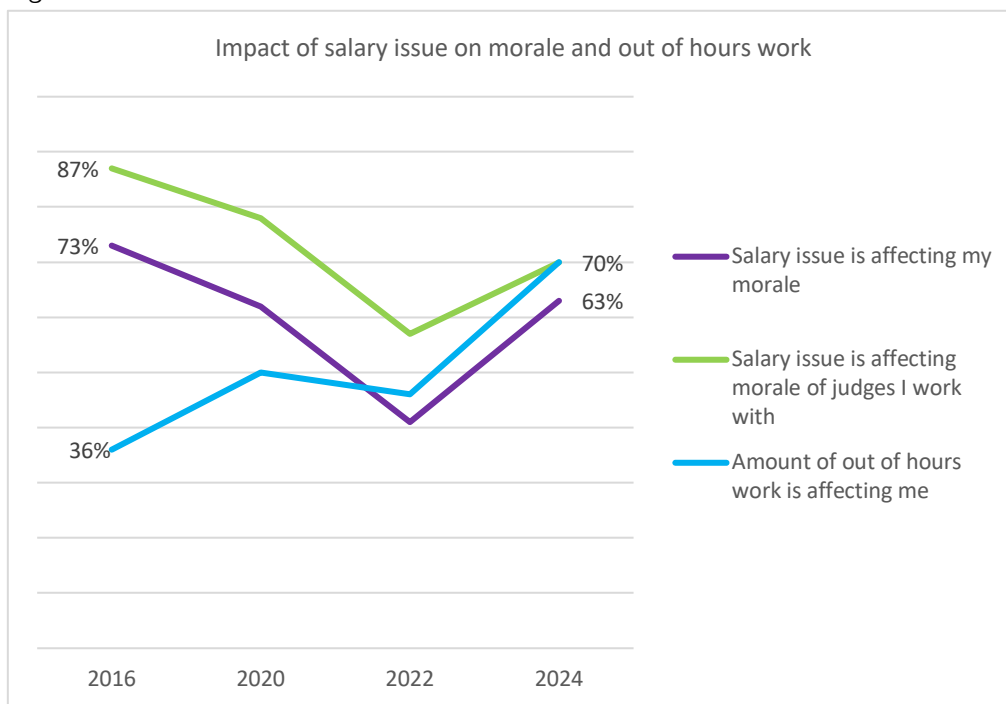
Salary and judicial morale

From 2016 (when it was first asked) a majority of judges have said that the salary issue was affecting their morale and the morale of the judges with whom they work. Initially from 2016 to 2022 these percentages fell, but this trend was reversed in 2024 with increased majorities of judges saying the salary issue was affecting their own morale (63%) and the morale of other judges (70%).

Out of hours work

From 2016 to 2024 there has also been a very substantial increase in the proportion of salaried judges saying they are affected by the amount of out of hours work required to do the job, from a minority of 36% in 2016 to a majority of 70% in 2024.

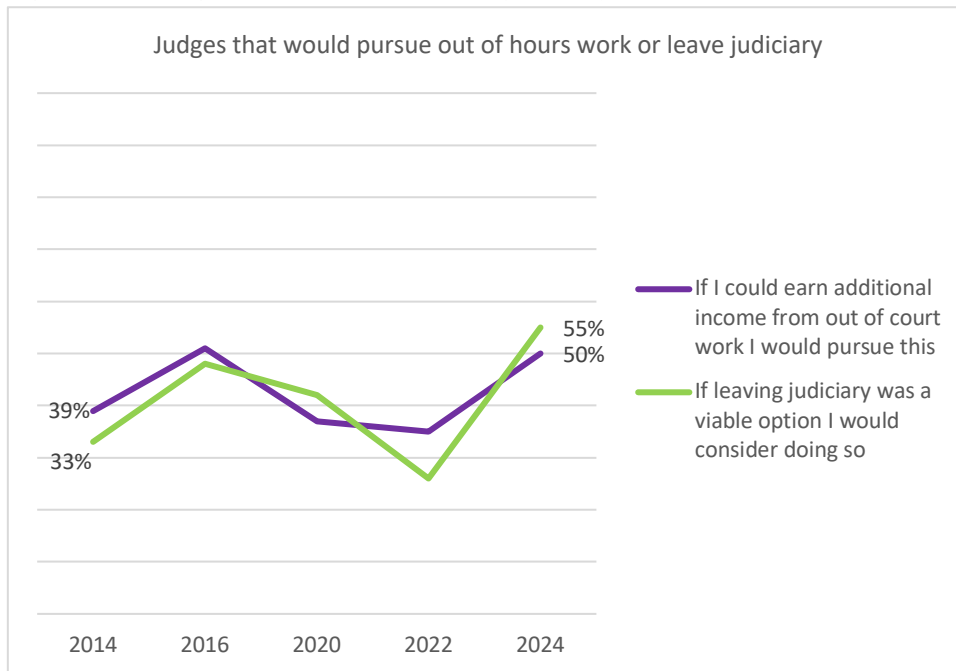
Figure 7.2: Morale and out of hours work 2016-2024



The possibility of leaving the judiciary or pursuing out of court work

Over the decade the proportion of salaried judges that said that they would consider leaving the judiciary if this was a viable option has increased from only a third (33%) in 2014 to a majority of 55% now in 2024. In the same period the proportion of judges that would pursue out of court work if they could earn additional income this way has also increased from 39% in 2014 to 50% now in 2024.

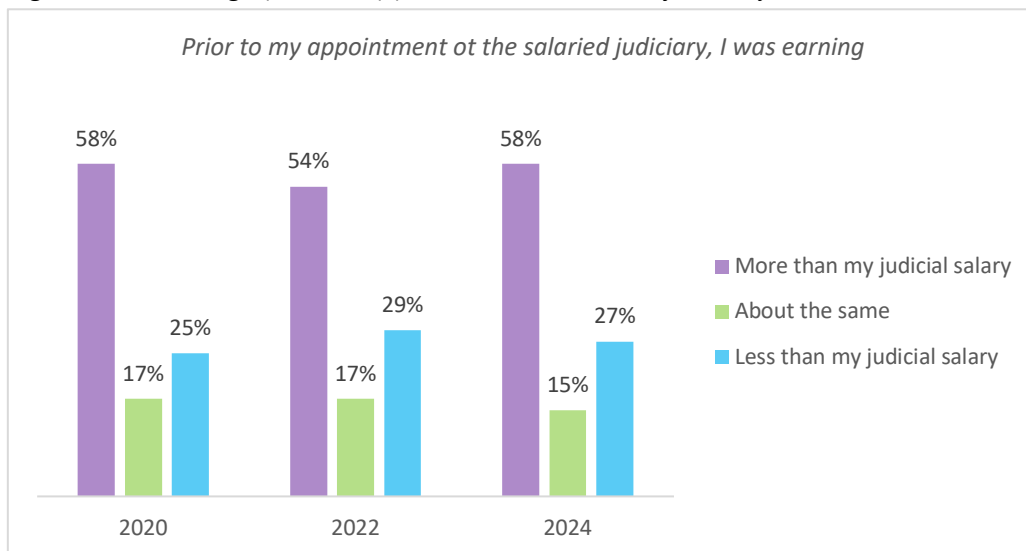
Figure 7.3: Judges that would leave the judiciary or pursue out of hours work



Salaried judges' earnings prior to appointment

In 2020, salaried judges in Northern Ireland were asked for the first time about their earnings just prior to their appointment to the salaried judiciary. In 2020, 2022 and 2024, a majority of salaried judges had earned more than their judicial salary prior to their appointment to the salaried judiciary, with only a quarter earning less than their judicial salary.

Figure 7.4: Earnings prior to appointment to salaried judiciary: 2020 -2024



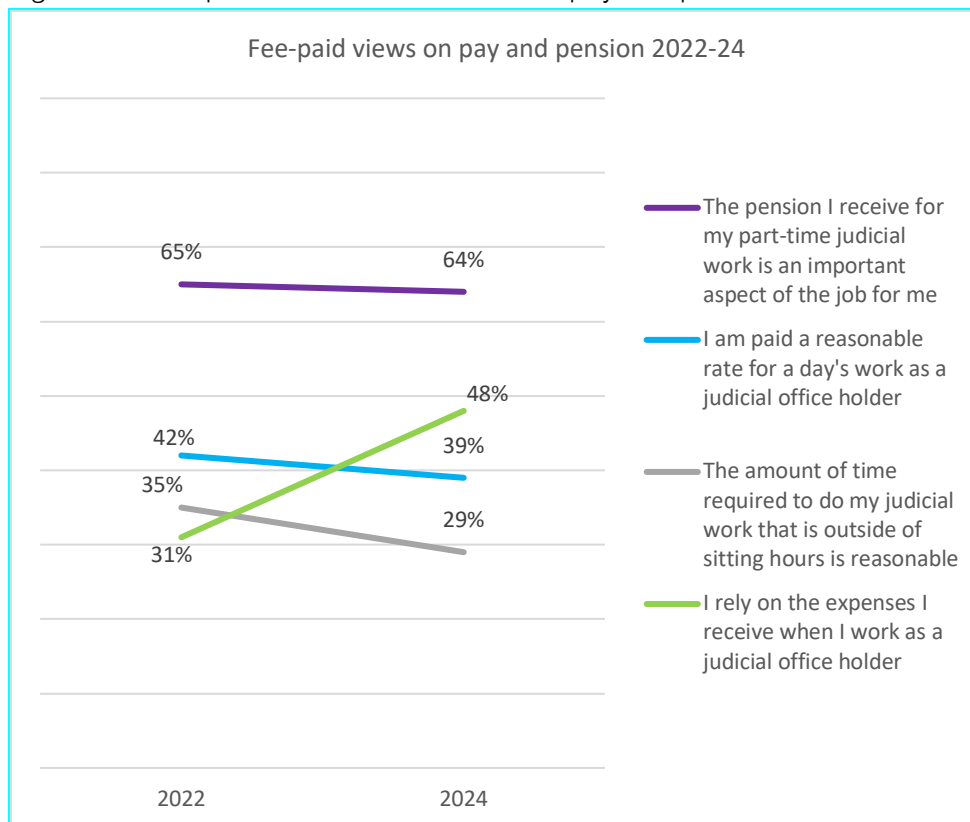
Chapter 8 Fee-paid judicial office holders: pay, pensions and expenses

In the 2022 JAS, fee-paid judicial office holders were first asked their views about their pay and pension. These same questions were asked in the 2024 JAS, and this has enabled an analysis of whether there have been any substantial changes in fee-paid views on pay and pensions in the last 2 years.

Trends in fee-paid office holder views on pay, pensions and expenses

A majority of fee-paid office holders continue to say the **pension** they receive for their part-time judicial work is an important aspect of the job (64% in 2024). There has been a substantial increase in the proportion of fee-paid office holders that rely on the **expenses** paid for their judicial work, from less than a third in 2022 (31%) to almost half in 2024 (48%). The proportion of fee-paid office holders that feel they are paid a **reasonable rate** for a day's work has fallen from 42% in 2022 to 39% in 2024. And the proportion of fee-paid judges that feel the amount of time required to do their judicial work that is **outside sitting hours** is reasonable has also fallen from 35% in 2022 to 29% in 2024.

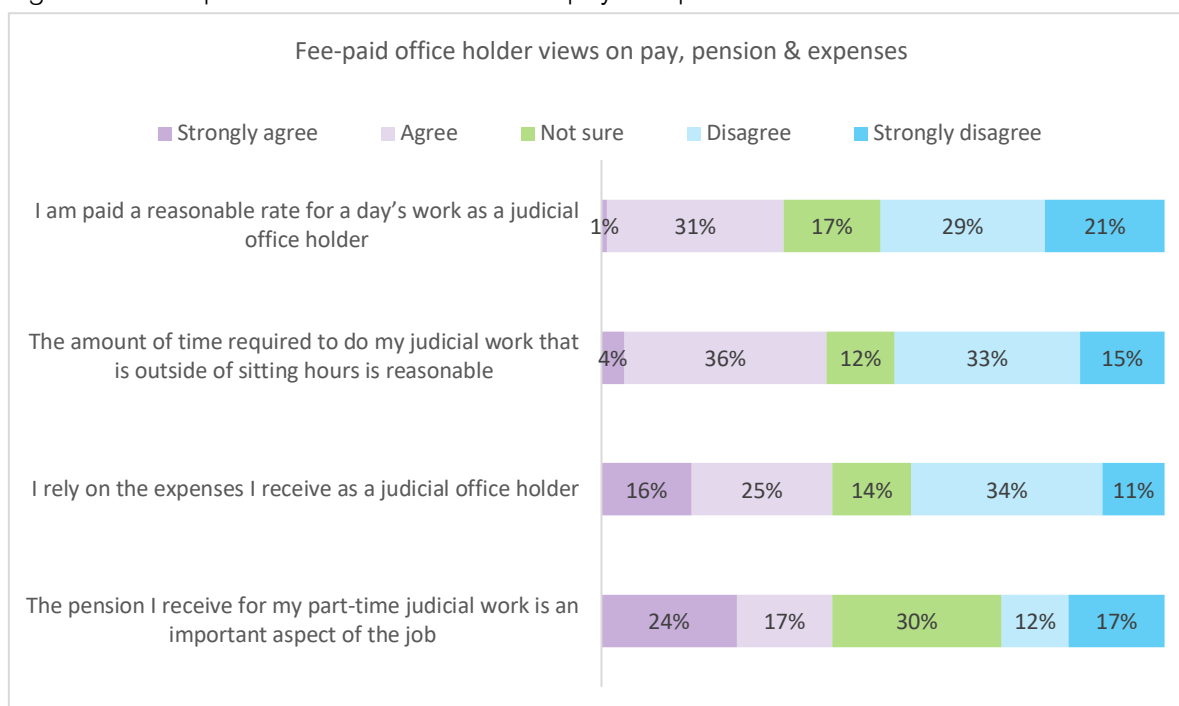
Figure 8.1: Fee-paid office holders' views on pay and pensions 2022 to 2024



Views on pay, pension and expenses 2024

Almost a quarter (21%) of fee-paid judicial officeholders in Northern Ireland strongly disagree that they are paid a reasonable rate for a day's work. Almost half (48%) of fee-paid office holders said that the amount of time required to do their work outside of sitting hours is not reasonable, with 15% strongly holding this view. Fee-paid office holders are divided in their views about whether they rely on their judicial expenses and whether the pension they receive for their part-time judicial work is an important aspect of the job for them.

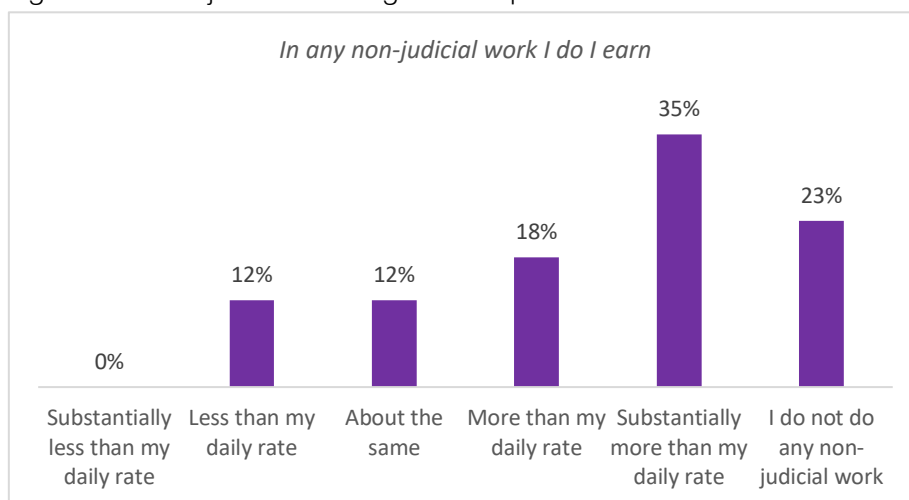
Figure 8.2: Fee-paid office holders' views on pay and pensions



Fee-paid earnings in any non-judicial work

A quarter (23%) of fee-paid judicial office holders do not do any non-judicial work. Of those that do non-judicial work, a majority (53%) earn more in their non-judicial work than their judicial daily rate, while only 12% earn less than their judicial daily rate.

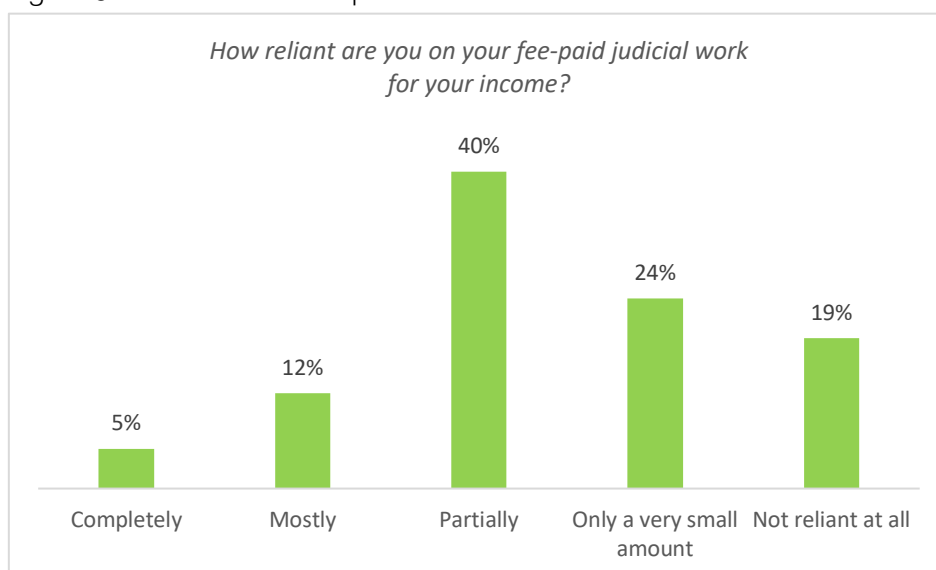
Figure 8.3: Non-judicial earnings for fee-paid office holders



Reliance on fee-paid judicial work for income

Only a small proportion (17%) of fee-paid office holders rely completely or mostly on their fee-paid judicial work for their income.

Figure 8.4: Reliance on fee-paid work



Chapter 9 Retention and recruitment

This chapter looks first at salaried and fee-paid judges' views about joining the salaried judiciary. It then explores fee-paid judicial office holders' views about recommending that others join the fee-paid judiciary. In the final section it examines salaried judges' intentions and motivations to leave the salaried judiciary early before their compulsory retirement age.

Joining the salaried judiciary

Since 2016 all salaried judges have been asked: *Knowing what you know now about your job as a judge would you still have applied to join the salaried judiciary?* A majority have always said yes, and there was a progressive increase in those salaried judges saying they would still have applied from 2016 (51%) to 2022 (68%), but this has fallen to 62% in 2024. This fall reflects not an increase in salaried judges that definitely would not still have applied but an increase in salaried judges that are not sure if they would still have applied.

Figure 9.1: Whether judges would still have applied (2014-2024)

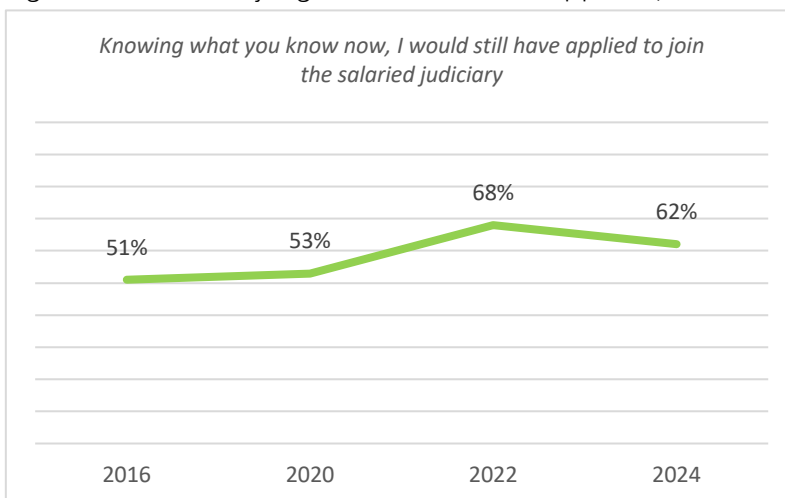
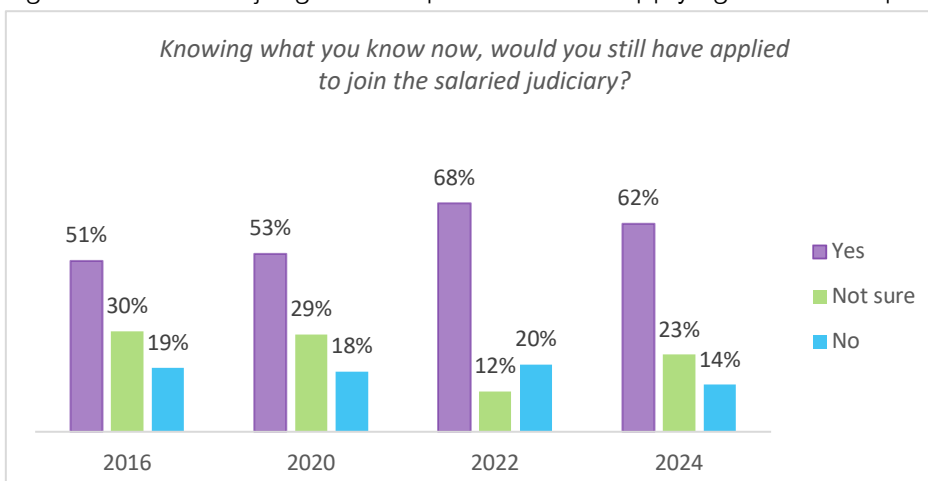


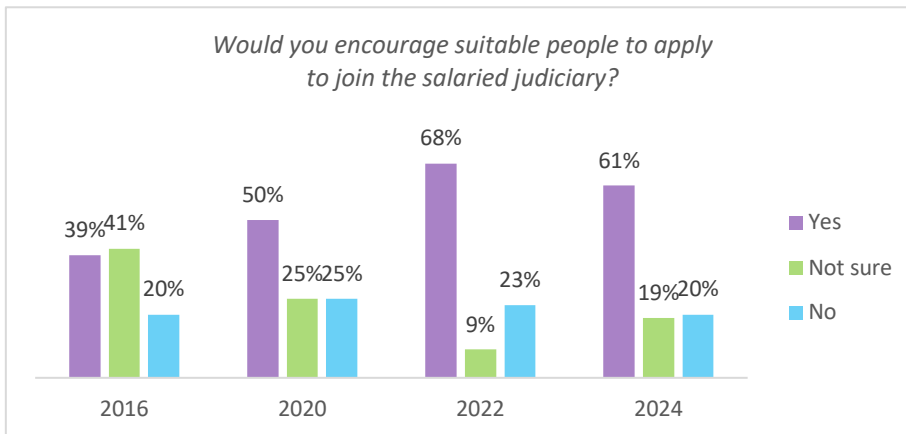
Figure 9.2: Salaried judges' retrospective view of applying for salaried post



Encouraging others to apply to join the salaried judiciary 2016-2024

There has been a substantial increase from 2016 in the proportion of salaried judges that said they would encourage suitable people to apply to join the salaried judiciary, from a minority of only 39% in 2016 to 62% in 2024 (although this is a slight fall from 2022 (68%) reflecting an increase in salaried judges that said they were not sure).

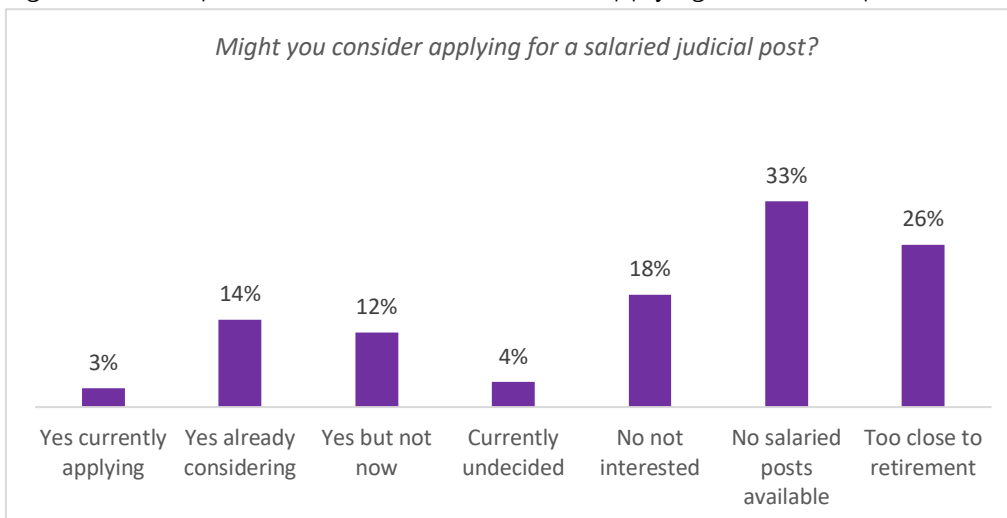
Figure 9.3: Salaried judges' willingness to encourage applicants



Fee-paid judicial office holders' intentions to apply to the salaried judiciary

Almost half of fee-paid judicial office holders either are not interested in applying for a salaried post (18%) or are too close to retirement to do so (26%). Over a quarter (27%) are either already applying (3%), considering applying for a salaried post (14%) or plan to do so in the future (12%).

Figure 9.4: Fee-paid office holders views about applying for salaried post



Note: Multiple options could be selected

The main reasons fee-paid judicial office holders in Northern Ireland **would** consider applying to become salaried judge are practical (opportunity to sit more often, job security and pension) as well as personal (challenge of the work, public service, intellectual satisfaction and the chance to contribute to justice being done).

Table 9.1: Reasons fee-paid judiciary would apply for a salaried post

| <i>The reasons I would consider applying to join the salaried judiciary are</i> | Fee-paid |
|---|----------|
| Opportunity to sit more often than I can as fee-paid | 58% |
| Challenge of the work | 54% |
| Public service | 54% |
| Intellectual satisfaction | 53% |
| Job security | 49% |
| Pension | 49% |
| Chance to contribute to justice being done | 47% |
| Salary | 47% |
| Sense of collegiality | 38% |
| Respect in the community | 25% |
| Prestige of the job | 23% |
| Less pressurised environment than practice | 18% |
| Administrative support | 10% |

Note: Multiple options could be selected

The main reasons fee-paid office holders in Northern Ireland **would not** consider applying for a salaried post are the judicial appointments process (41%), the ability to sit as many days as they want as a fee-paid judge (38%) and the lack of personal control over their working time (30%). Isolation of the job (25%) and uncertainty over where they would be required to sit (22%) were also identified as factors by a quarter or more of fee-paid judicial office holders.

Table 9.2: Reasons fee-paid judiciary would not apply for a salaried post

| <i>The reasons I would not consider applying to join the salaried judiciary are</i> | 2024 JAS |
|---|----------|
| Judicial appointments process | 41% |
| I can sit as many days as I want as a fee-paid judge | 38% |
| Lack of personal control over working time | 30% |
| Isolation of the job | 25% |
| Uncertainty over where I'd be required to sit | 22% |
| Reduction in income | 17% |

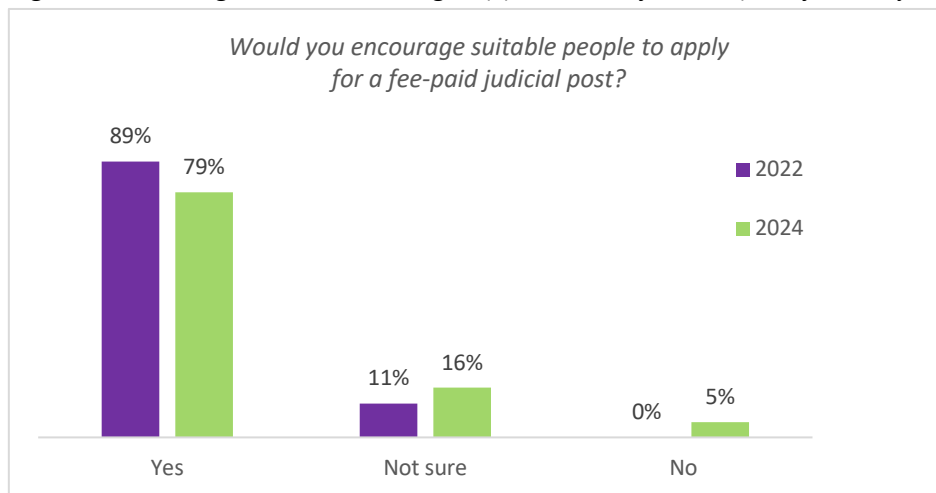
| | |
|---|-----|
| Feeling of being an employee or civil servant | 13% |
| Increase in litigants in person | 11% |
| Poor quality of physical work environment | 9% |
| Lack of variety in the work | 9% |
| Too much out of hours work required to do the job | 9% |
| Too few opportunities for promotion | 8% |
| Loss of travel expenses | 6% |
| Being required to do work outside my expertise | 6% |
| Lack of respect for judges | 6% |
| Experience of changes to pension entitlements | 6% |
| Lack of administrative support | 5% |

Note: Multiple options could be selected

Joining the fee-paid judiciary

In both 2022 and 2024, the overwhelming majority of fee-paid judicial office holders said they would encourage suitable people to apply to join the fee-paid judiciary and very few said they would not encourage others to apply. However, fewer fee-paid office holders in 2024 (79%) said they would encourage other to join the fee-paid judiciary than in 2022 (89%).

Figure 9.5: Willingness to encourage applicants to join fee-paid judiciary



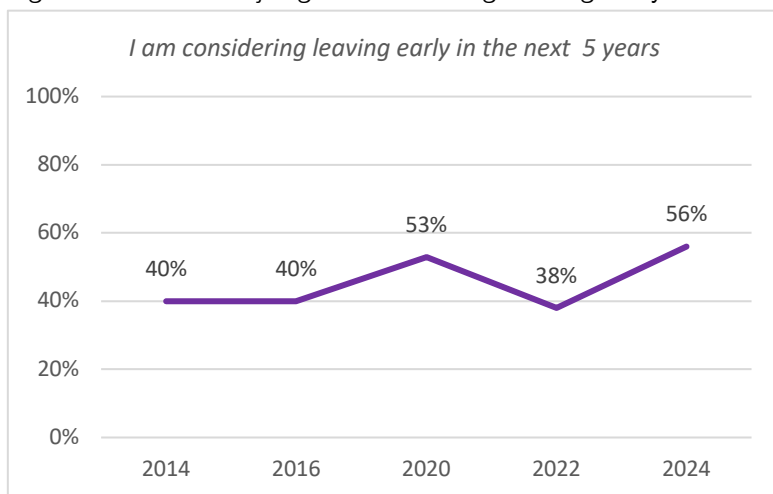
Leaving the salaried judiciary early

Since 2014 all salaried judges in Northern Ireland have been asked whether they were considering leaving early before compulsory retirement within the next 5 years.

Trends from 2014 to 2024

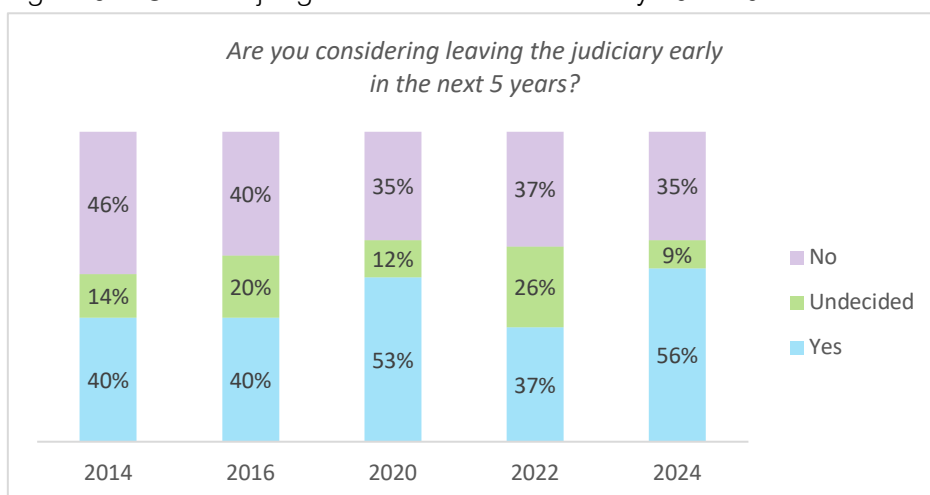
The proportion of salaried judges saying they are considering leaving the judiciary early has fluctuated over the decade, but overall the proportion intending to leave early has increased from a minority of 40% in 2014 to a majority of 56% in 2024.

Figure 9.6: Salaried judges considering leaving early 2014-2024



By 2024, the smallest proportion of salaried judges in the decade (9%) were undecided about leaving early, the smallest proportion (35%) were not considering leaving the salaried judiciary early and the largest proportion in the decade (56%) were considering leaving early.

Figure 9.7: Salaried judges' intentions to leave early 2014-2024



In numerical terms, this amounts to a total of 32 salaried judges intending to leave early by 2029, with 3 more reaching compulsory retirement age in that period for a total of 35 departures. If those judges who are currently undecided about leaving early in the next 5 years are also included this would mean 42 potential departures from the salaried judiciary by 2029.

Table 9.3: Numbers of salaried judges in Northern Ireland projected to leave in next 5 years

| Salaried post | Intending to leave early in the next 5 years | Will reach compulsory retirement in next 5 years | Total expected to leave in next 5 years | Currently undecided about leaving early | Total potentially leaving in the next 5 years |
|-----------------------|--|--|---|---|---|
| Tribunal Judge | 4 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 5 |
| Coroner | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| District Judge | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| District Judge (Mags) | 8 | 1 | 9 | 3 | 12 |
| County Court Judge | 7 | 2 | 9 | 0 | 9 |
| Master of High Court | 5 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| High Court Judge | 5 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| Total | 32 | 3 | 35 | 7 | 42 |

Factors prompting early departure for the salaried judiciary

The factors most likely to prompt salaried judges in Northern Ireland to leave the judiciary early were limits on pay awards (71%), increases in workload (59%), lack of respect for the judiciary by government (54%), a reduction in pension benefits (53%), further demands for out of hours working (53%), increase in litigants in person (44%) and personal security concerns (43%).

Table 9.4: Factors increasing likelihood of salaried judges leaving judiciary early

| <i>Which of the following factors would make you more likely to leave the judiciary early before your compulsory retirement age?</i> | Salaried judges |
|--|-----------------|
| Limits on pay awards | 71% |
| Increase in workload | 59% |
| Lack of respect for the judiciary by government | 54% |
| Reduction in pension benefits | 53% |
| Further demands for out of hours working | 53% |
| Increase in litigants in person | 44% |
| Personal security concerns | 43% |
| Reduction in administrative support | 43% |
| Stressful working conditions | 36% |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Personal health issues | 34% |
| Attacks on the judiciary by the media | 33% |
| Lack of promotion | 28% |
| Inability to work more flexible hours | 20% |
| Lack of effective leadership of the judiciary | 16% |
| Too much remote working | 16% |
| Lack of stimulating work | 15% |
| Requirement to sit in a location too far from home | 12% |
| Court closures | 10% |
| Uncertainty over the future of my part of the judiciary | 10% |

Note: Multiple options could be selected

Main factors encouraging judges to remain in the salaried judiciary

There was one main factor that would make salaried judges in Northern Ireland more likely to stay in the judiciary until their compulsory retirement age: higher remuneration (83%). Just over half of all salaried judges in Northern Ireland also said better administrative support (54%), reduction in workload (53%) and appointment to a higher post (51%) would make them more likely to stay in the judiciary until their compulsory retirement age. Close to a half also said reduction in litigants in person (49%), greater respect for the work judges do (43%) and better security for judges (41%) would make them more likely to remain.

Table 9.5: Factors encouraging salaried judges to remain in judiciary

| Which of the following factors would make you more likely to stay in the judiciary until your compulsory retirement age? | Salaried judges |
|--|-----------------|
| Higher remuneration | 83% |
| Better administrative support | 54% |
| Reduction in workload | 53% |
| Appointment to a higher post | 51% |
| Reduction in litigants in person | 49% |
| Greater respect for the work judges do | 43% |
| Better security for judges | 41% |
| Opportunity to work part-time | 34% |
| Opportunity for sabbatical | 32% |
| Support for dealing with stressful working conditions | 29% |
| Increased flexibility in working hours | 27% |
| Having more leadership responsibilities | 27% |
| Better leadership of the judiciary | 19% |
| Greater certainty over the future of my part of the judiciary | 19% |
| Greater variation in work | 15% |

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Change of work location | 10% |
| Increase in remote working | 2% |

Note: Multiple options could be selected

Since its introduction a decade ago, the UK Judicial Attitude Survey has enabled judges to share their experiences and views on aspects of their work as a judge that affect their wellbeing. Initially this covered working conditions, case workload and judges' views of belonging and satisfaction in their work. But it has expanded over the last decade to address other aspects of judicial wellbeing. This chapter covers judges' experiences of bullying, harassment and discrimination; their awareness of judicial expected behaviour; and their views on recent compulsory inclusion training for all judges. The next chapter (11) deals with judicial stress, which is also directly relevant to judicial wellbeing.

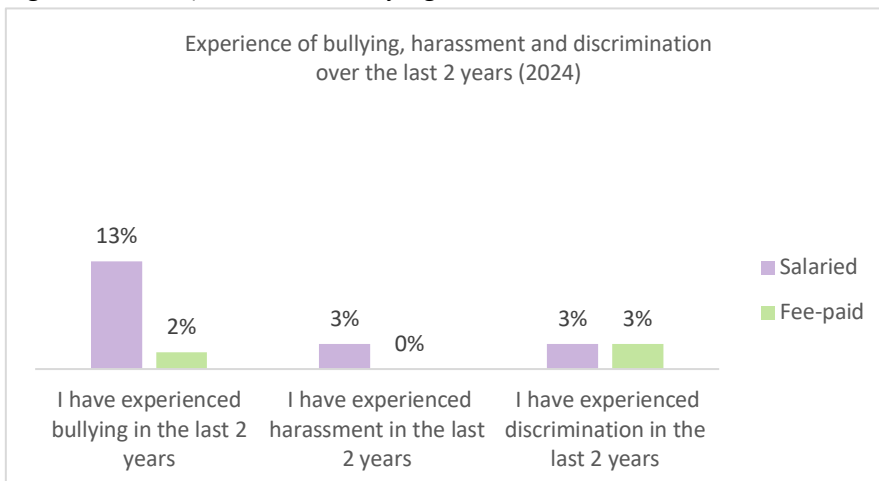
Bullying, harassment and discrimination

Two years ago in the 2022 JAS, salaried and fee-paid judges were asked for the first time whether they had experienced bullying, harassment or discrimination in the last 2 years in their role as a judge. These questions were asked again in 2024 with some additional questions, which has made it possible to see whether these judicial experiences are higher, lower or the same compared with previous years and to understand the nature of judges' experiences in a clearer way.

2024 experience of bullying, harassment and discrimination in the last 2 years

The overwhelming majority of both salaried judges (89%) and fee-paid judicial office holders (91%) in Northern Ireland said they had not experienced bullying, harassment or discrimination in their work as a judge in the last 2 years. Amongst the small number who had experienced bullying, harassment or discrimination in the last 2 years, this was more prevalent amongst salaried judges than fee-paid judicial office holders

Figure 10.1: Experience of bullying, harassment and discrimination



The most numerous reports were of bullying for salaried judges: this amounted to 13% of salaried judges or 8 judges.

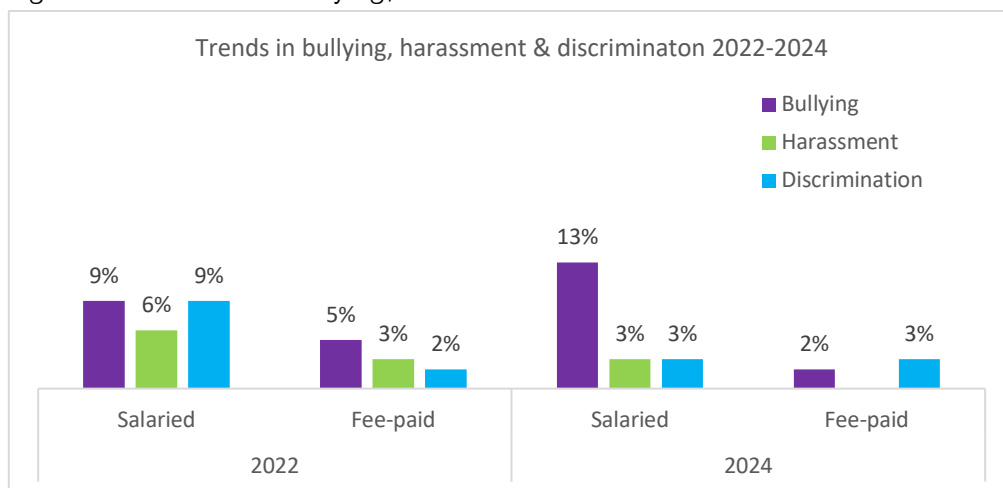
Table 10.1: Experience of bullying, harassment and discrimination

| | Salaried | | Fee-paid | | totals |
|---|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Courts | Tribunals | Courts | Tribunals | |
| I have experienced bullying in the last 2 years | 4 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 11 |
| I have experienced harassment in the last 2 years | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| I have experienced discrimination in the last 2 years | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| totals | 5 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 17 |

Trends in bullying, harassment and discrimination 2022-2024

Since 2022, there has been a decrease in members of the judiciary reporting that they have experienced bullying, harassment and discrimination in both the salaried and fee-paid judiciary with one exception. In 2024 a larger proportion of salaried judges reporting experiencing bullying over the previous 2 years (13%) compared with 2022 (9%).

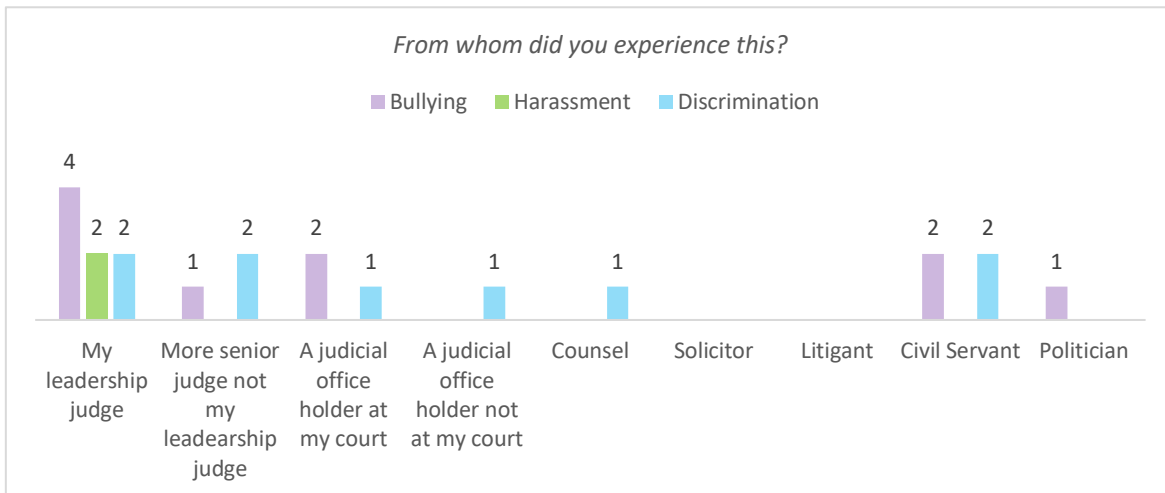
Figure 10.2: Trends in bullying, harassment and discrimination



Sources of bullying, harassment or discrimination

Those who reported experiencing bullying, harassment or discrimination in the last 2 years were asked: *If you did experience any bullying, harassment or discrimination in the last 2 years, from whom did you experience it?* Figure 10.3 shows from whom this was experienced and how many judges experienced it (salaried and fee-paid combined).

Figure 10.3: Source of bullying, harassment or discrimination (salaried and fee-paid combined)



Note: Multiple options could be selected

Nature of bullying

Undermining of work was reported most frequently for both salaried and fee-paid judges, although there were other reports of overbearing leadership, ridiculing or demeaning language and consistent unproductive criticism as well as single reports of other forms of bullying.

Table 10.2: The nature of the bullying experienced

| What was the nature of the bullying you experienced? | Salaried | Fee-paid |
|--|----------|----------|
| Undermining of my work | 4 | 2 |
| Overbearing leadership | 4 | 0 |
| Ridiculing or demeaning language | 3 | 1 |
| Consistent unproductive criticism | 2 | 0 |
| Implicit or explicit threats | 1 | 0 |
| Deliberately being given inappropriate work | 1 | 0 |
| Treatment on social media | 1 | 0 |
| Exclusion from discussions | 0 | 1 |
| Subjected to malicious rumours | 0 | 0 |
| Violence (threatened or actual) | 0 | 0 |

Note: Multiple options could be selected

Nature of the harassment

Of the small number of salaried judges who said they had experienced harassment in the last 2 years, it was on the basis of sex, age and disability.

Table 10.3: Nature of the harassment experienced

| <i>On what basis did the harassment occur?</i> | Salaried Judges |
|--|-----------------|
| Sex | 1 |
| Age | 1 |
| Disability | 1 |
| Race (inc. colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin) | 0 |
| Religion or belief | 0 |
| Being married or in a civil partnership | 0 |
| Sexual orientation | 0 |
| Gender reassignment | 0 |
| Being pregnant or on maternity leave | 0 |

Note: Multiple options could be selected

Nature of the discrimination

Amongst the small number of salaried and fee-paid judges reporting discrimination over the last 2 years, this was on the basis of age, sex, disability and religion.

Table 10.4: Basis of discrimination experienced

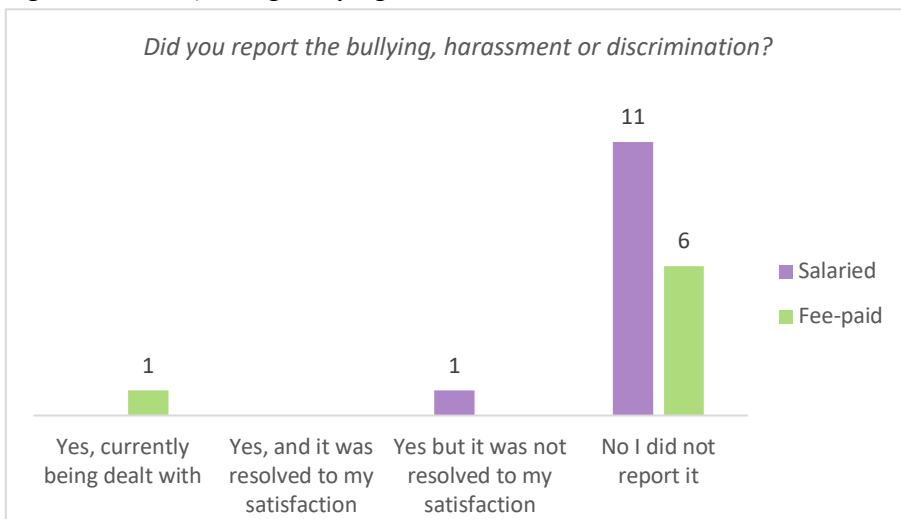
| <i>On what basis did the discrimination occur?</i> | Salaried | Fee-paid |
|--|----------|----------|
| Age | 2 | 3 |
| Sex | 1 | 1 |
| Disability | 0 | 3 |
| Religion or belief | 0 | 1 |
| Race (inc. colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin) | 0 | 0 |
| Sexual orientation | 0 | 0 |
| Being married or in a civil partnership | 0 | 0 |
| Gender reassignment | 0 | 0 |
| Being pregnant or on maternity leave | 0 | 0 |

Note: Multiple options could be selected

Reporting bullying, harassment or discrimination

Those who reported experiencing bullying, harassment or discrimination in the last 2 years were asked: *If you did experience any bullying, harassment or discrimination in the last 2 years, did you report it?* Almost all salaried and fee-paid members of the judiciary that said they had experienced bullying, harassment or discrimination in the last 2 years did not report this.

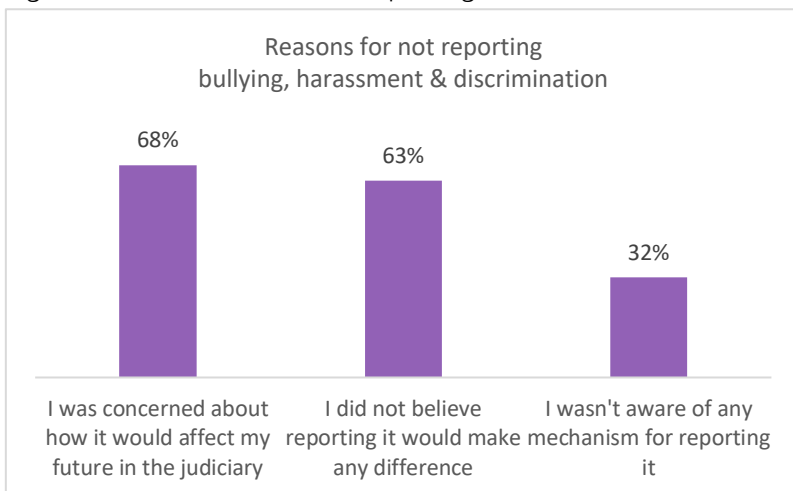
Figure 10.4: Reporting bullying, harassment or discrimination



Reasons for not reporting

The most prevalent reasons salaried and fee-paid members of the judiciary did not report the bullying, harassment or discrimination they said they experienced in the last 2 years was because they were concerned about how reporting would affect their future in the judiciary (68%) and because they did not believe that reporting it would make any difference (63%).

Figure 10.5: Reasons for not reporting



Note: Multiple options could be selected

There is growing recognition internationally of the unique aspects of the judicial role that can create high levels of stress and lead to problems with judicial wellbeing. In the 2024 UK JAS, specific questions were included for the first time on judges’ levels and sources of stress, their physical and mental health and sick days taken as a result of stress. This chapter provides an analysis of the results for Northern Ireland of this first examination of judicial stress in the UK.

Self-assessment of stress levels over the last 2 years

In the 2024 JAS all members of the judiciary were asked: *How much stress connected with your job as a judicial office holder have you experienced over the past 2 years?* The highest stress levels were reported by salaried judges, with much lower proportions of fee-paid judges reporting stress levels at the extreme end of the range (6&7), and the largest proportion of fee-paid judges reporting the lowest levels of stress (1&2).

Figure 11.1: Salaried and fee-paid judiciary self-assessed stress levels



Stress symptoms

Salaried and fee-paid judicial office holders’ self-declaration of stress symptoms shows a clear and consistent pattern. Amongst all members of the judiciary that took part in the 2024 JAS there were very high levels reported of sleep disturbances (70% for salaried and 62% for fee-paid), as well as headaches (55% and 40%), irritability (43% and 31%) and muscle tension (43% and 26%).

Table 11.1: Stress symptoms for Northern Ireland judiciary

| Stress symptoms | Salaried | Fee-paid |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Sleep disturbances | 70% | 62% |
| Headaches | 55% | 40% |
| Irritability | 43% | 31% |
| Muscle tension | 43% | 26% |
| Increased sense of isolation | 36% | 17% |
| Altered socialising habits | 30% | 13% |
| Lack of concentration | 27% | 18% |
| Burnout | 27% | 16% |
| Altered eating habits | 24% | 20% |
| Intolerance of others | 23% | 14% |
| Stomach upsets | 18% | 20% |
| Anger | 16% | 12% |
| Blurred vision | 14% | 4% |
| Drinking or smoking more | 13% | 7% |
| Feelings of guilt | 7% | 9% |
| Chest pains | 5% | 10% |
| Loss of objectivity | 5% | 3% |
| Loss of compassion | 4% | 10% |

Note: Multiple options could be selected

Factors contributing to judicial stress

The most prevalent factors contributing to judicial stress for **salaried judges** in Northern Ireland relate to 3 things: time, inherent aspects of judicial work and personal safety. The most frequently cited stress factors are time-related: difficulties achieving a reasonable work-life balance (61%) and lack of personal time due to judicial workload (53%). But specific case-related factors were also prevalent, including the types of evidence judges have to deal with (46%) and managing trials (44%). It is also notable that almost half of all salaried judges (46%) said concerns over their personal safety were contributing to the stress of their job.

The factors contributing to (the lower levels of) judicial stress for **fee-paid office holders** were in part different, including concerns over the impact of their decisions (27%) and dealing with online technology (27%), as well as the types of evidence they have to deal with (26%).

Table 11.2: Factors contributing to stress for Northern Ireland judiciary


| Factors contributing to judicial stress | Salaried | Fee-paid |
|--|----------|----------|
| Difficulties in achieving a reasonable work-life balance | 61% | 21% |
| Lack of personal time due to judicial workload | 53% | 12% |
| Types of evidence I have to deal with | 46% | 26% |
| Concerns over my personal safety | 46% | 14% |
| Managing how trials/hearings proceed | 44% | 21% |
| Losing contact with colleagues/friends | 38% | 5% |
| Scrutiny of my work | 34% | 13% |
| Amount of screen time in my job | 28% | 12% |
| Dealing with online technology for judicial work | 21% | 27% |
| Adverse media/social media comments about judicial decisions | 19% | 5% |
| Last minute changes to my judicial work schedule | 18% | 20% |
| Concerns over the impact of my judicial decisions | 16% | 27% |
| Concerns over interpreting the law | 10% | 12% |
| Leadership responsibilities | 8% | 3% |
| Workplace conflict with others | 7% | 5% |

Note: Multiple options could be selected

Self-assessment of physical and mental health

As part of the new section of the 2024 JAS on judicial stress, all members of the judiciary were asked to rate their current overall physical and current overall mental health on a scale of 1 (Poor) to 7 (Excellent). For both physical and mental health, more fee-paid members of the Northern Ireland judiciary rated their health as 6 or 7 (Excellent) than salaried judges in Northern Ireland: 67% excellent for fee-paid physical health compared with 42% excellent for salaried judges; 73% excellent for fee-paid mental health compared with 45% excellent for salaried judges.

Table 11.3: Self-assessment of physical and mental health NI judiciary

| Self-assessed rating | | Physical health | | Mental health | |
|--|---|-----------------|----------|---------------|----------|
| | | Salaried | Fee-paid | Salaried | Fee-paid |
| Poor  Excellent | 1 | 2% | 3% | 2% | 0% |
| | 2 | 0% | 3% | 3% | 3% |
| | 3 | 12% | 3% | 9% | 5% |
| | 4 | 22% | 5% | 11% | 5% |
| | 5 | 23% | 19% | 30% | 14% |
| | 6 | 22% | 32% | 31% | 41% |
| | 7 | 20% | 35% | 14% | 32% |

Sick days taken

A total of 15 members of the judiciary said they had to take sick days due to stress in the last 2 years: 9 salaried judges and 6 fee-paid judicial office holders.

Table 11.4: Judges taking sick days due to stress

| Type of judicial post | Judges having to take sick days for stress in last 2 years |
|-----------------------|--|
| Salaried | 9 |
| Fee-paid | 6 |
| total | 15 |

Support services used and helpfulness of services

For those members of the Northern Ireland judiciary who sought the assistance from support services to deal with stress in their job, most relied on a conversation with their leadership judge. The other possible sources of support were rarely used. Most of those who had a conversation with their leadership judge or use an external support service found these helpful.

Table 11.5: Judicial support services use and helpfulness for Northern Ireland judiciary

| Judicial Support Services | Salaried Used (Helpful) | Fee-paid Used (Helpful) |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Conversation with my leadership judge | 29% (82%) | 17% (84%) |
| External support service | 10% (50%) | 8% (91%) |
| LMS e-learning on managing stress and building resilience | 7% (50%) | 3% (25%) |
| LMS e-learning on mindful judging and guided meditation | 3% (50%) | 3% (0%) |
| Counselling through PRRT | 3% (0%) | 1% (50%) |

Note: Multiple options could be selected

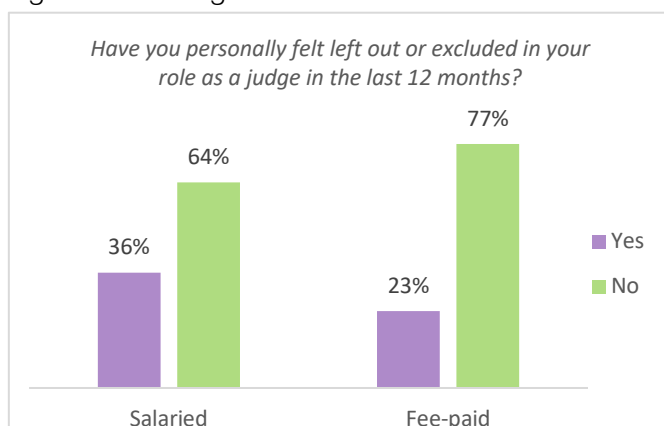
Chapter 12 Respect in the judicial workplace

This chapter covers the extent to which all members of the judiciary in Northern Ireland feel included and treated with respect by others in the judiciary. For fee-paid judicial office holders it also explores how welcome they are made to feel at their court or tribunal and the extent to which they receive important information about their court or tribunal before they sit.

Being left out or excluded

For the first time in 2024 the JAS asked all members of the judiciary: *Have you personally felt left out or excluded in your role as a judicial office holder in the last 12 months?* While only a minority of both salaried and fee-paid members of the judiciary said they had felt left out or excluded as a judge in the last 12 months, larger proportions of salaried judges (36%) felt left out or excluded than fee-paid judges (23%).

Figure 12.1: Judges left out/excluded



Basis of being left out or excluded as a judge

The reasons members of the judiciary gave most often for being made to feel left out or excluded were not being included in communications, not being listened to in meetings, having information withheld about their judicial role and being undermined in front of colleagues and staff.

Table 12.1: Ways in which judges felt left out/excluded

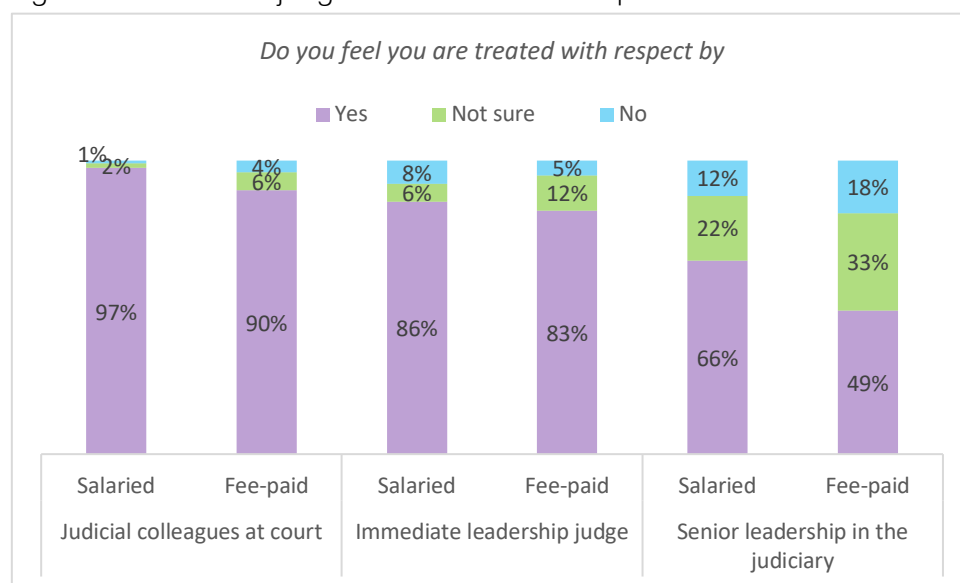
| <i>On what basis did you feel left out or excluded?</i> | Salaried n=24 | Fee-paid n=9 |
|--|------------------|-----------------|
| Not being included in communications | 57% | 67% |
| Not being listened to in meetings | 44% | 0% |
| Having information withheld from me about my job | 39% | 22% |
| Being undermined in front of colleagues or staff | 22% | 11% |
| Being the subject of jokes or having offensive jokes told in my presence | 13% | 0% |
| Being excluded or made to feel unwelcome from social activities | 4% | 22% |

Note: Multiple options could be selected; n=number of judges answering

Respect

Almost every judge, whether salaried or fee-paid, feels respected by their judicial colleagues at the court where they work. Almost all salaried and fee-paid judges feel respected by their immediate leadership judge. Two thirds of salaried judges but less than half (49%) of fee-paid office holders feel they are treated with respect by the senior leadership in the judiciary.

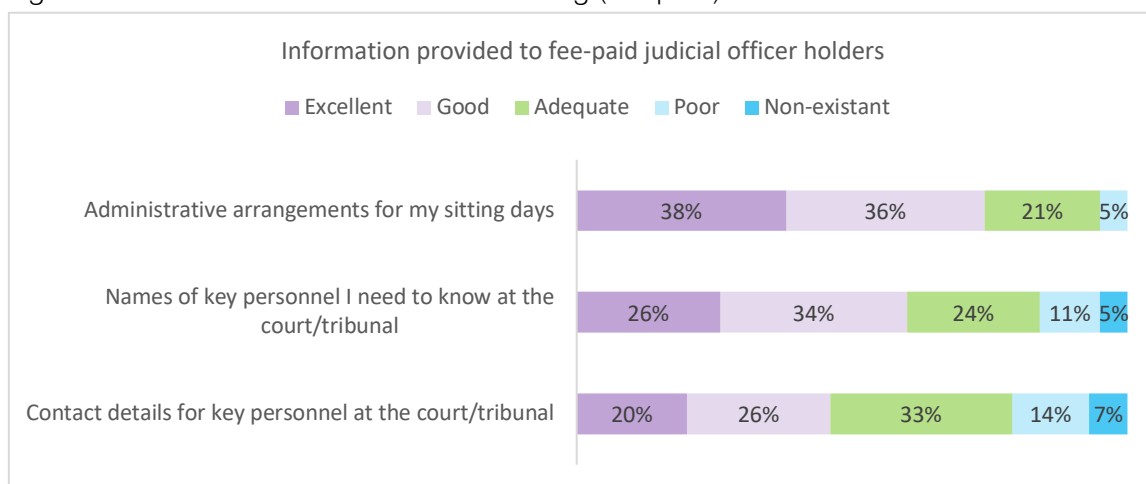
Figure 12.2: Whether judges feel treated with respect



Inclusion and information provided (fee-paid)

Amongst fee-paid judicial office holders who may not sit regularly or may sit at different courts or tribunals, receiving relevant information before sitting can be important. Most said the information about administrative arrangements for sitting days and the names of key personnel they need to know was either excellent or good. But less than half (46%) said information on the contact details for key personnel was excellent or good.

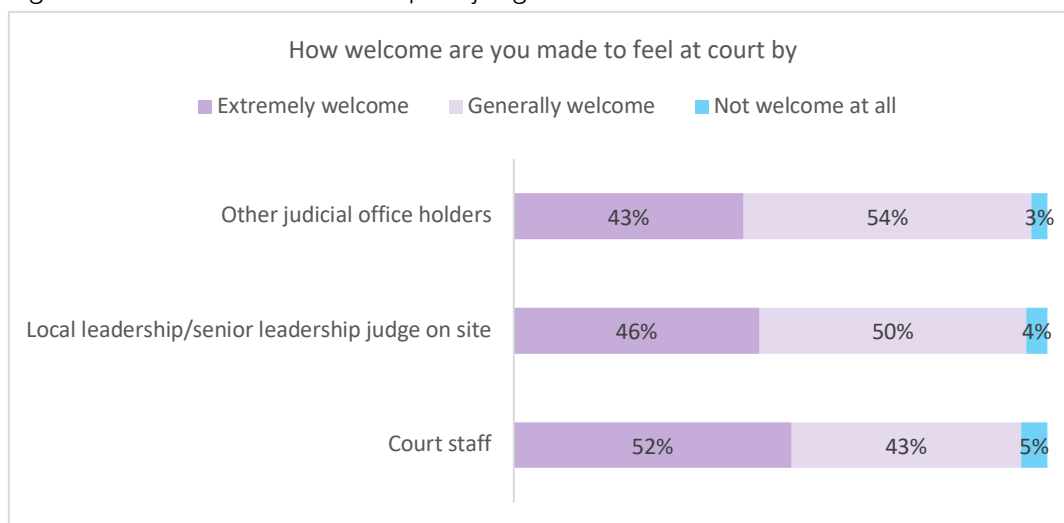
Figure 12.3: Information received before sitting (fee-paid)



Feeling welcome (fee-paid)

Virtually all fee-paid judicial office holders said that they are made to feel extremely or generally welcome by court staff (95%), by other judicial office holders (97%) and by local or senior leadership judges on site (96%).

Figure 12.4: Extent to which fee-paid judges feel welcome at court



Chapter 13 Training and personal development

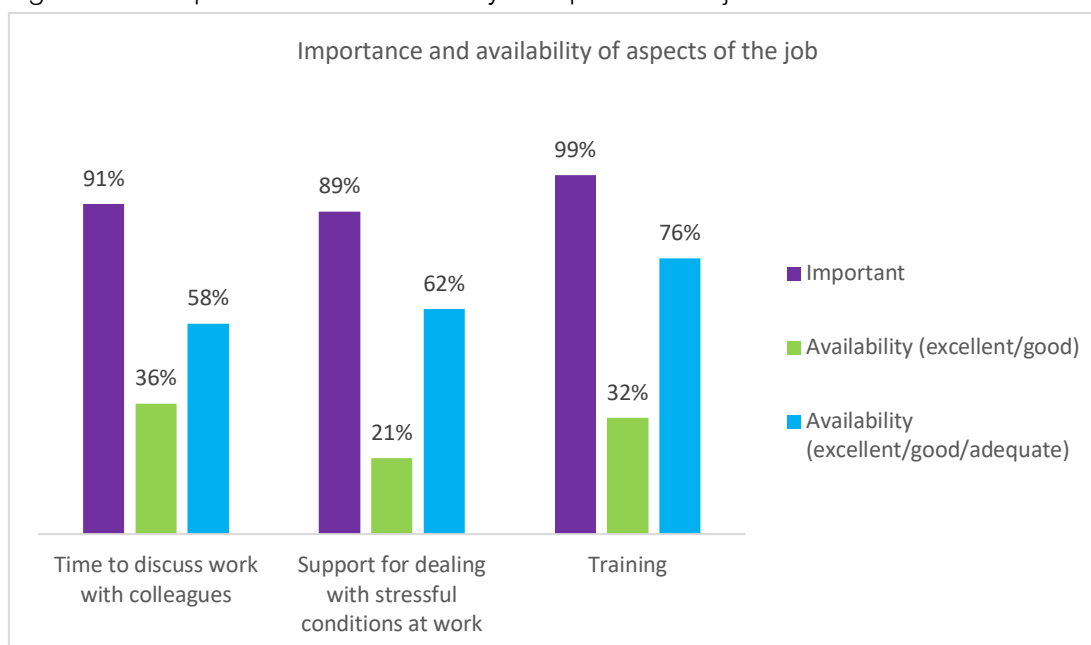
This chapter explores judges' view about the aspects of their job as a judge and opportunities that are most valued and how available these currently are to them. This includes an assessment of the judicial training currently available to members of the judiciary and whether judges would like more or less of certain types of judicial training.

Important aspects of the job and their availability

Almost all salaried judges in Northern Ireland said that the following were important aspects of their job as a judge: time to discuss work with colleagues (91%), support for dealing with stressful conditions at work (89%) and training (99%).

When asked to rate the availability of these three aspects of their judicial role, a third or fewer judges rated any of the three aspects of their work as excellent or good. If those who rated the three important aspects of the job as "adequate" were also included, a majority of judges said these were available. But the proportion who said the availability was excellent/good/adequate was still not as high as the proportion of judges that said each aspect of the job was important.

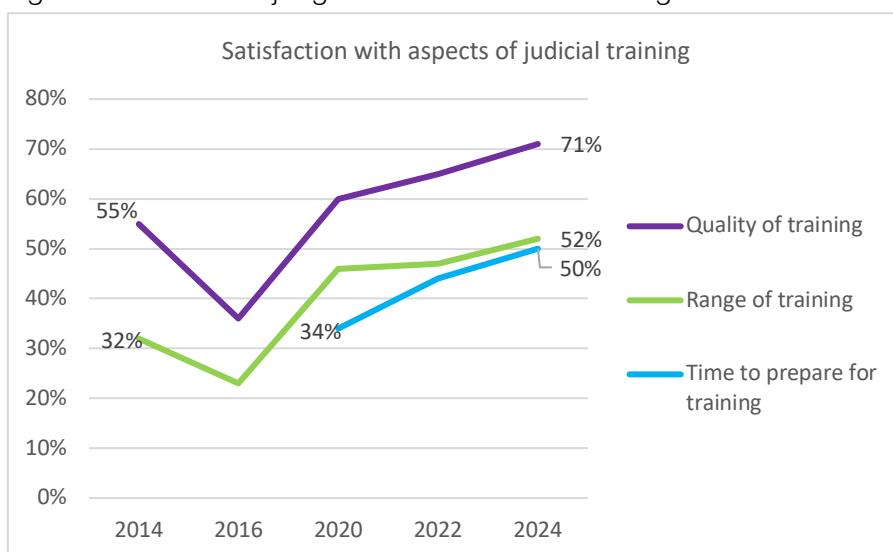
Figure 13.1: Importance and availability of aspects of the job



Training trends 2014-2024

While initially there was a decline in Northern Ireland judges' satisfaction with the range and quality of training from 2014 to 2016, this trend has been reversed since 2016 with judges' satisfaction levels increasing for both the quality of training (71% now satisfied) and the range of training available to them (52% now satisfied). Judges' satisfaction with the time they are given to prepare for training has also increased since 2016 (when it was asked for the first time), from 34% to 50%.

Figure 13.2: Salaried judges' satisfaction with training 2014--2024

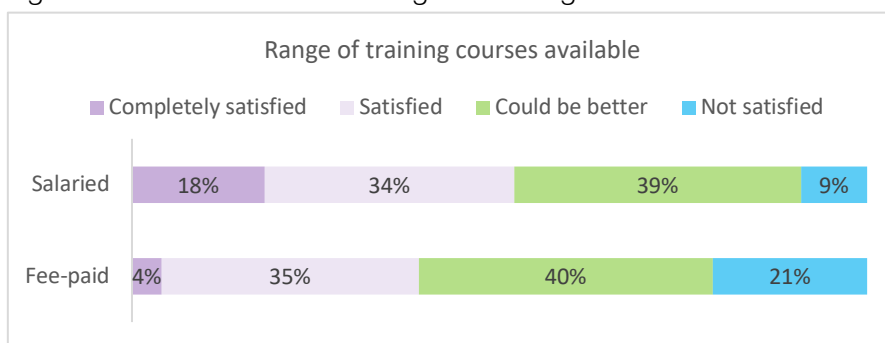


Satisfaction with training 2024

Range of training courses available

Fee-paid judicial office holders in Northern Ireland have a slightly higher level of satisfaction with the range of training courses available (51%) than salaried judges (47%), but nearly half of all judges said that the range of training courses could be better.

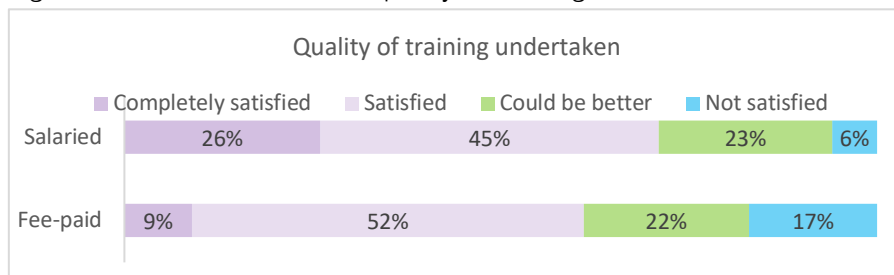
Figure 13.3: Satisfaction with range of training



Quality of training undertaken

While a majority of salaried judges (71%) and fee-paid office holders (61%) are satisfied with the quality of the training they receive, a quarter of judges said the quality of training could be better and 17% of fee-paid judges said they were not satisfied with the quality of the training.

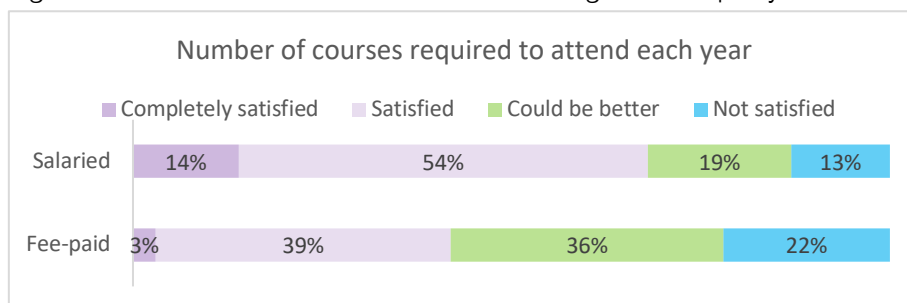
Figure 13.4: Satisfaction with quality of training



Number of training courses judges are required to attend each year

A majority of salaried judges (68%) are satisfied with the number of training courses they are required to attend each year, but only a minority of fee-paid office holders are satisfied with this.

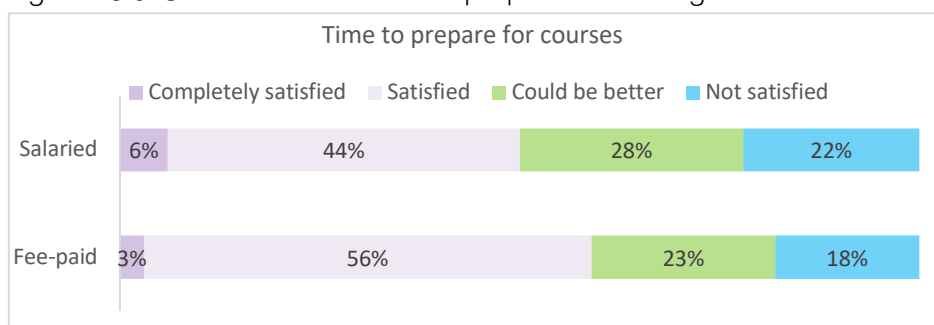
Figure 13.5: Satisfaction with number of training courses per year



Time to prepare for training courses

While half of fee-paid (59%) and salaried judges (50%) are satisfied with the time they have to prepare for training courses, large proportions of are not satisfied and feel it could be better

Figure 13.6: Satisfaction with time to prepare for training



Interest in types of training

A majority of both salaried and fee-paid members of the judiciary in Northern Ireland want more 1-day courses at or near their court/tribunals, specialist courses for their part of the judiciary and general judicial skills courses. Salaried judges also would like more residential courses that last several days. There is not a demand for more online courses by salaried judges, and fee-paid office holders are divided on this.

Table 13.1: Interest in types and frequency of judicial training

| <i>To what extent would you like more or less of the following in your judicial training?</i> | | Salaried | Fee-paid |
|---|-------------------------|----------|----------|
| Residential training courses over several days | I would like more | 57% | 33% |
| | Current amount is right | 40% | 52% |
| | I would like fewer | 3% | 15% |
| 1-day courses at or near my court/tribunal | I would like more | 63% | 63% |
| | Current amount is right | 37% | 35% |
| | I would like fewer | 0% | 2% |
| Online training courses | I would like more | 19% | 45% |
| | Current amount is right | 51% | 29% |
| | I would like fewer | 30% | 16% |
| Specialist courses for my part of the judiciary | I would like more | 69% | 69% |
| | Current amount is right | 31% | 29% |
| | I would like fewer | 0% | 2% |
| General judicial skills courses | I would like more | 66% | 62% |
| | Current amount is right | 32% | 36% |
| | I would like fewer | 2% | 2% |

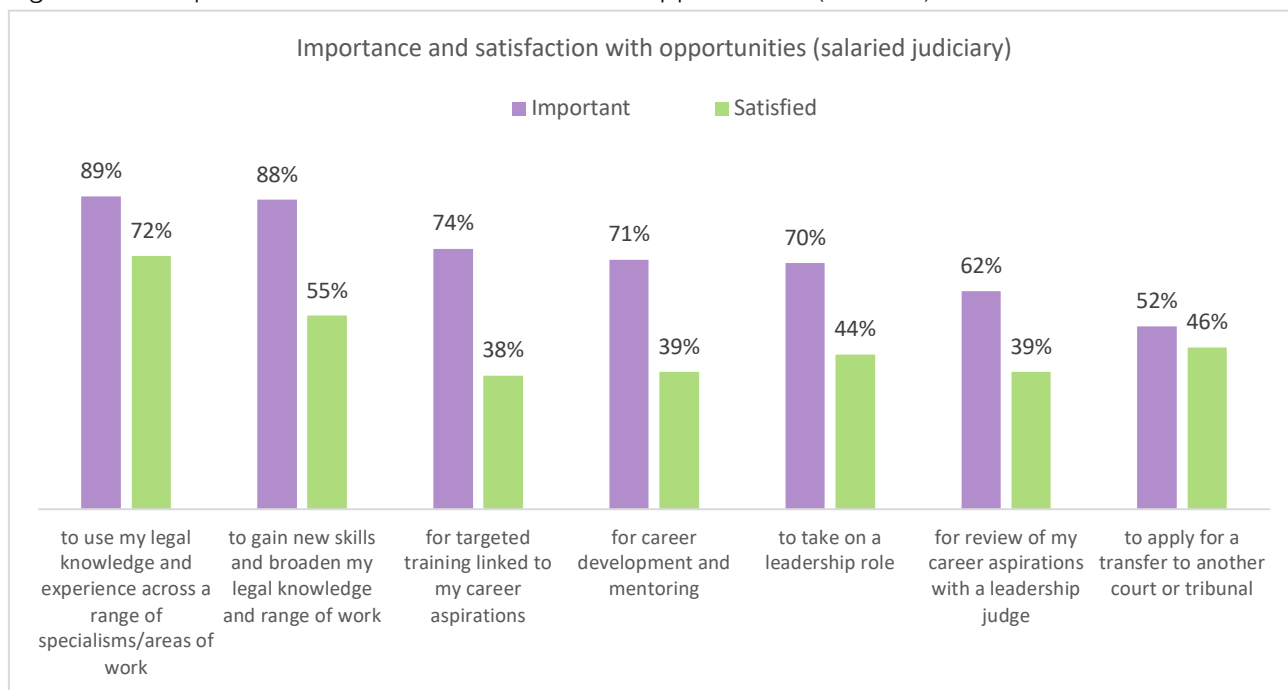
Opportunities for salaried judges

Almost all salaried judges said that the most important opportunities were to use their legal knowledge and experience across a range of specialisms and areas of work (89%) and to gain new skills and broaden their legal knowledge and range of work (88%). And while a majority of judges said they were satisfied with these two opportunities, the proportion of judges who were satisfied was lower than the proportion of judges that said the opportunities were important.

Almost three-quarters of all salaried judges also said that the following opportunities were important to them: for targeted training linked to their career aspirations (74%), for career development and mentoring (71%) and to take on a leadership role (70%); and 62% said that the opportunity for review of their career aspirations with a leadership judge and the opportunity

to apply for a transfer to another court or tribunal (52%) were important. But in all these instances, only a minority of judges were satisfied with the availability of these opportunities.

Figure 13.7: Importance and satisfaction with work opportunities (salaried)



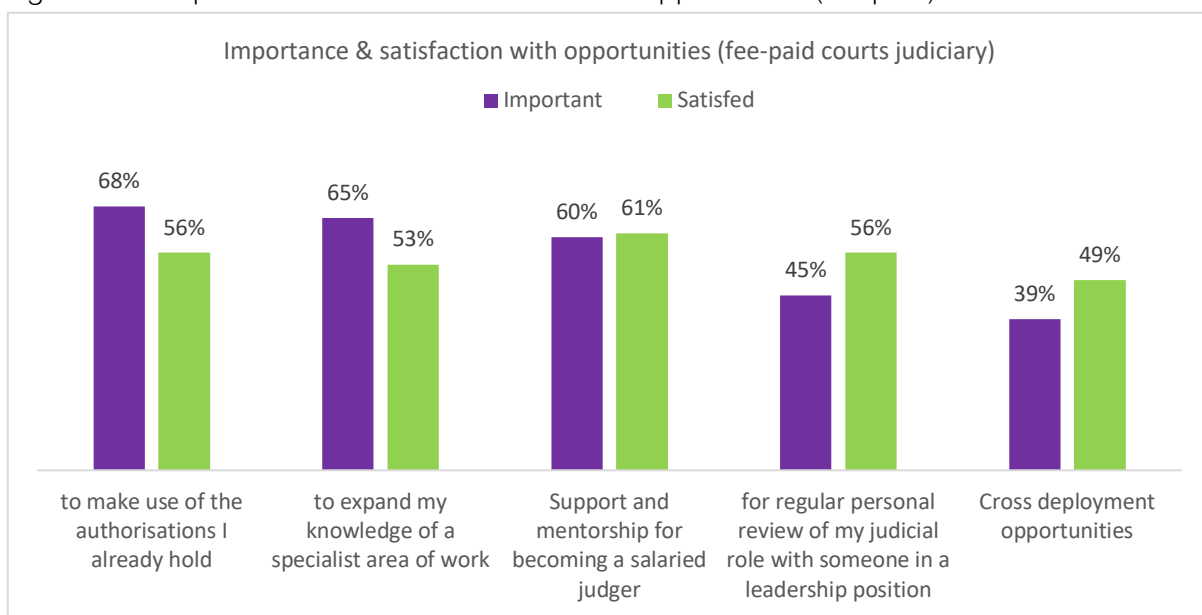
Fee-paid courts judges

There are three opportunities a majority of fee-paid courts judges said were important to them:

- to make use of the authorisations that they already hold: 68% said it was important to them and 56% were satisfied with the availability of this opportunity;
- to expand their knowledge of a specialist area of work: 65% said it was important and 53% were satisfied with this opportunity;
- support and mentorship for becoming a salaried judge: 60% said it was important and 61% were satisfied with this opportunity.

Only a minority of fee-paid courts judges said the opportunity for a regular review of their role with a leadership judge (45%) and cross deployment (39%) were important opportunities and in both instances more fee-paid judges were satisfied with the availability of these opportunities than said the opportunities were important.

Figure 13.8: Importance and satisfaction with work opportunities (fee-paid)



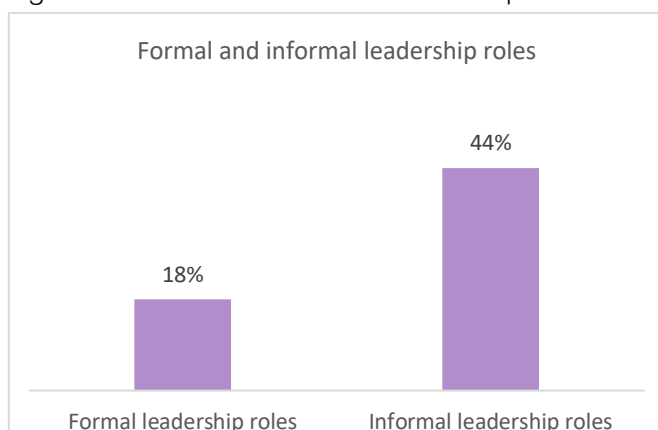
Chapter 14 Leadership

This chapter applies only to salaried judges, as it examines the distribution and allocation of leadership roles amongst salaried judges and explores judges' views about the role and performance of leadership judges.

Holding leadership roles and responsibilities

While just under half (44%) of all salaried judges said they held some informal leadership roles, only a small proportion (18%) held a formal leadership role.

Figure 14.1: Formal & informal leadership roles



Interest in taking on a leadership role

Two thirds of salaried judges (65%) are interested in taking on a leadership role, but for 14% of these judges there are no leadership roles available in their jurisdiction and 16% would only be interested if they felt leadership roles were properly rewarded.

Table 14.1: Willingness to take on leadership responsibilities

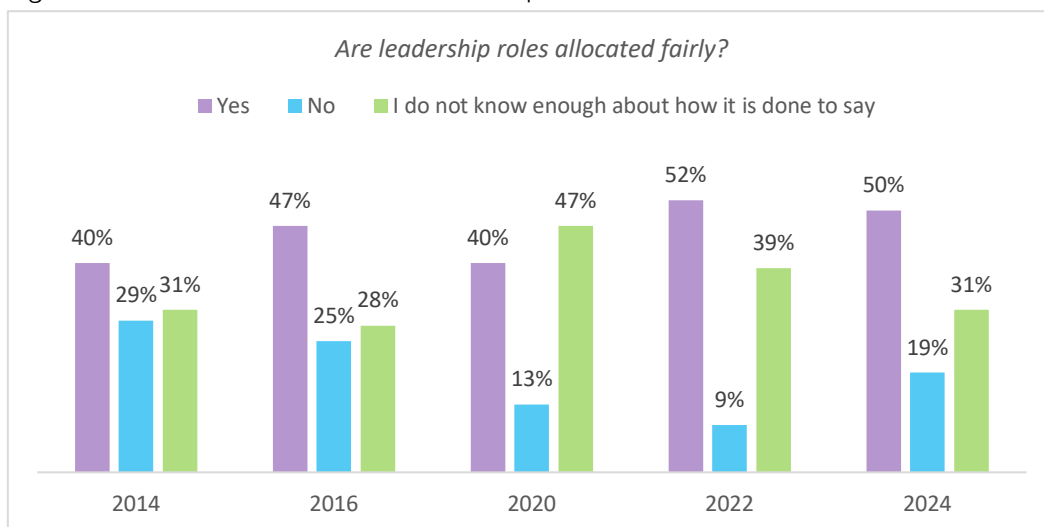
| <i>Are you interested in taking on more leadership responsibilities?</i> | Salaried judges |
|---|-----------------|
| Yes | 35% |
| Yes, but none are currently available in my jurisdiction | 14% |
| Yes, I would be interested if roles were properly rewarded | 16% |
| No, a leadership role is not for me | 5% |
| No, I have/have had enough leadership responsibilities already | 14% |
| Not at the present time but possibly in future | 10% |
| Not sure | 5% |
| I am currently in a renewable leadership role and will not seek to renew it | 2% |

Note: Multiple options could be selected

Fairness of leadership role allocation

In each JAS since 2014, salaried judges in Northern Ireland have been asked: *Do you feel that leadership roles are allocated fairly?* The proportion of salaried judges saying that leadership roles are allocated fairly has increased over the decade from 40% in 2014 to 52% in 2024. The proportion of salaried judges who feel they do not know enough about how leadership roles are allocated to say whether or not it is done fairly increased during the decade but is now the same as it was ten years ago (31%).

Figure 14.2: Views of fairness of leadership role allocation 2014-2024

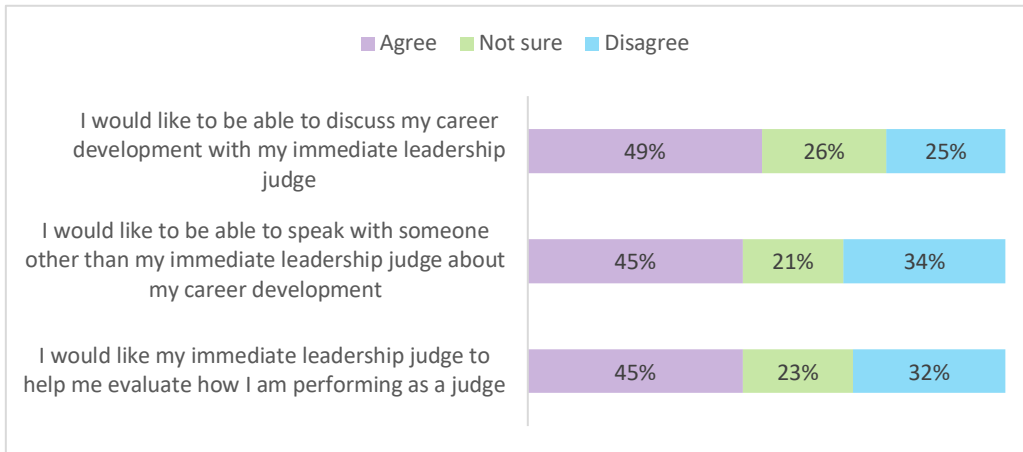


Leadership judges

Personal development and leadership/presiding judges

Salaried judges are divided in their views about whether they would like to discuss their career development with their immediate leadership/presiding judge. Almost half said they would like to discuss their career development with their immediate leadership judge yes (49%), would like to discuss their career development with someone other than their immediate leadership/presiding judge (45%), and would like their immediate leadership judge to help them evaluate how they are performing as a judge (45%). But over half disagreed or were not sure.

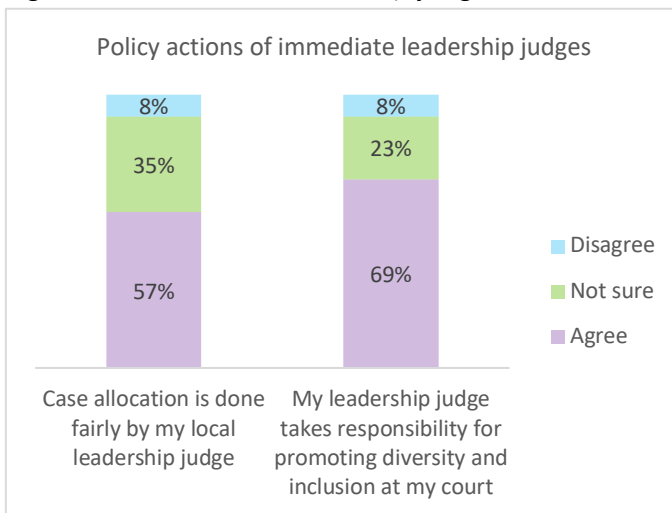
Figure 14.3: Salaried judges' views about assistance from their leadership judges



Policy actions of immediate leadership judges

A majority of salaried judges feel that case allocation is done fairly by their local leadership judge (57%) and feel their leadership judge takes responsibility for promoting diversity and inclusion at their court (69%).

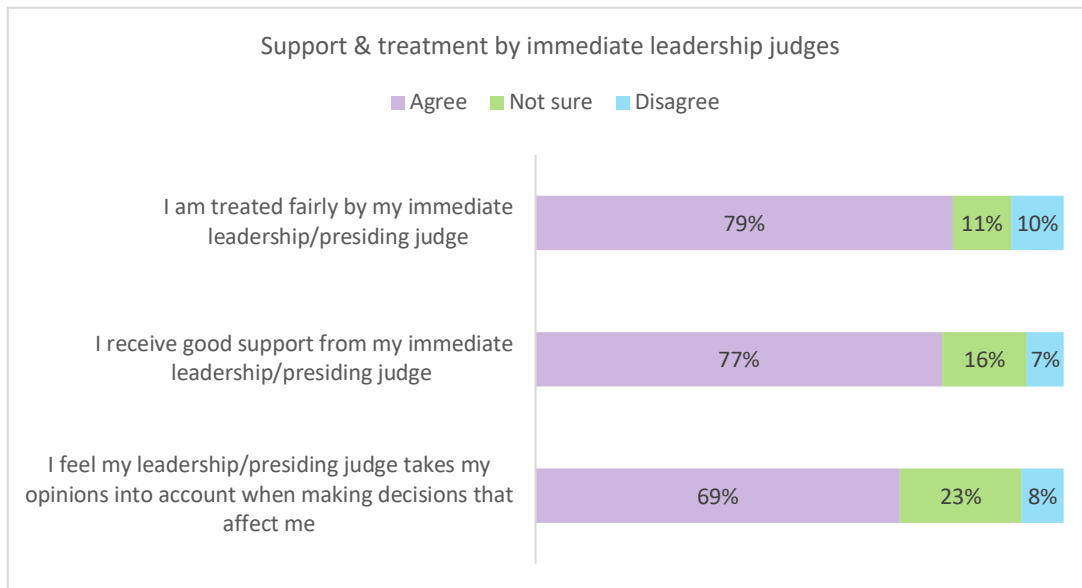
Figure 14.4: Action of leadership judges



Support and treatment by immediate leadership judges

Most salaried judges feel they are treated fairly by their immediate leadership judge (79%) and that they receive good support from them (77%). A majority (69%) feel their leadership judge takes their opinions into account when making decisions that affect them, but almost a quarter (23%) were not sure about this or 8% disagreed.

Figure 14.5: Support and treatment by leadership judges



Chapter 15 Tenure in the judiciary and professional background

This chapter provides information on: tenure in current post, whether judges holding multiple judicial posts, non-judicial work for fee-paid judicial office holders, professional background and any fee-paid judicial experience before taking up a salaried judicial post.

Tenure in the judiciary

Table 15.1: Tenure in current post (salaried and fee-paid)

| Time in current post | Salaried | Fee-paid |
|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Less than 1 year | 0% | 16% |
| 1-5 years | 43% | 34% |
| 6-10 years | 21% | 4% |
| 11-14 years | 13% | 18% |
| 15-20 years | 15% | 6% |
| More than 20 years | 8% | 22% |

Table 15.2: When first appointed to judiciary

| Date of 1 st appointment | Salaried judges when 1st appointed to salaried post | Fee-paid when 1st appointed |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Before 1 April 1995 | 0% | 2% |
| 1 April 1995-1999 | 8% | 22% |
| 2000-2004 | 8% | 2% |
| 2005-2009 | 20% | 8% |
| 2010-2014 | 15% | 20% |
| 2015-2019 | 20% | 8% |
| 2020-2022 | 25% | 8% |
| 2023-2024 | 5% | 30% |

Table 15.3: Currently holding other judicial post(s)

| Whether holding any other judicial posts | Salaried | Fee-paid |
|--|----------|----------|
| Yes | 21% | 26% |
| No | 79% | 74% |

Figure 15.1: Prior fee-paid post and whether full-time now

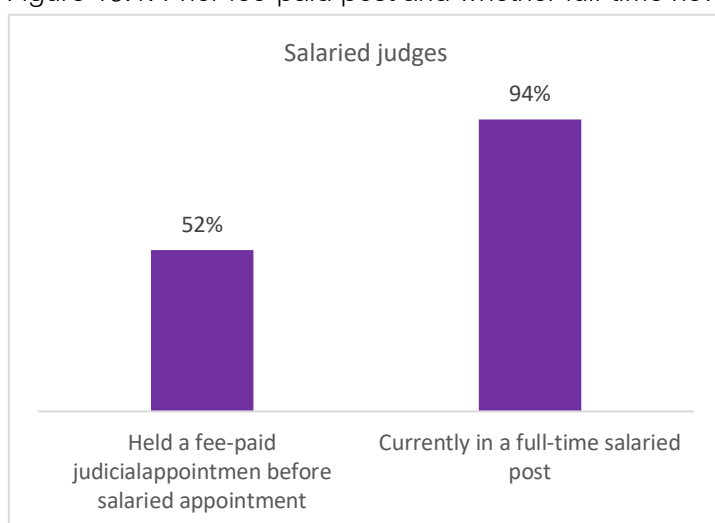


Table 15.4: Work done before joining the salaried judiciary

| Type of work undertaken before appointment to the salaried judiciary | Salaried judges |
|--|-----------------|
| Barrister | 51% |
| Solicitor | 51% |
| Other legal work | 7% |
| Employed barrister | 0% |
| Legal academic | 0% |
| Legal executive | 0% |
| Other non-legal work | 0% |

Note: Multiple options could be selected

Table 15.5: Current non-judicial work for fee-paid office holders

| Type of current non-judicial work | Fee-paid courts judges |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| I do not have any non-judicial work | 24% |
| Solicitor | 39% |
| Barrister | 24% |
| Non-legal work | 3% |
| Employed barrister | 3% |
| Legal academic | 0% |
| Legal executive | 0% |
| Other | 12% |

Chapter 16 Demographics of the judiciary

This chapter provides important information on the demographics of members of the judiciary in Northern Ireland, covering age, sex, ethnicity, disability (including whether any reasonable adjustments have been requested in the last 2 years), secondary and higher education. The high response rate to the JAS means these results provide a strong indication of the demographic characteristics of judges and judicial office holders currently in post, including in relation to a number of demographic characteristics that are often not reported in official statistics on the judiciary.

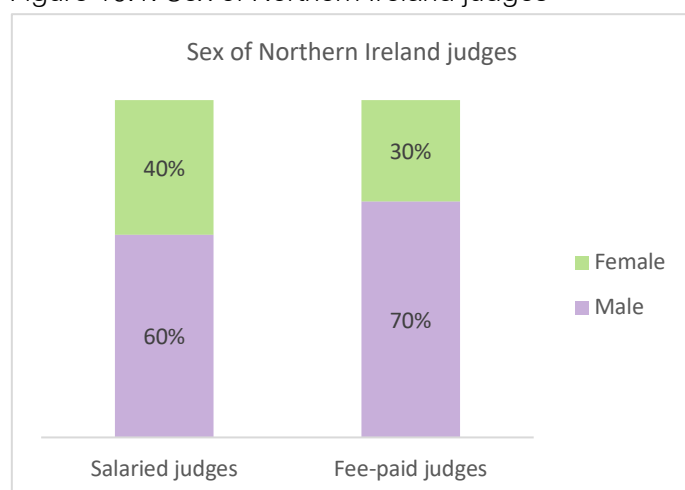
Age

Table 16.1: Age of Northern Ireland judiciary

| Age of Northern Ireland judges (June-July 2024) | Salaried | Fee-paid |
|---|----------|----------|
| Under 35 | 0% | 0% |
| 35-39 | 0% | 6% |
| 40-49 | 23% | 12% |
| 50-59 | 26% | 29% |
| 60-65 | 35% | 15% |
| 66-69 | 13% | 18% |
| 70 and over | 3% | 20% |

Sex

Figure 16.1: Sex of Northern Ireland judges



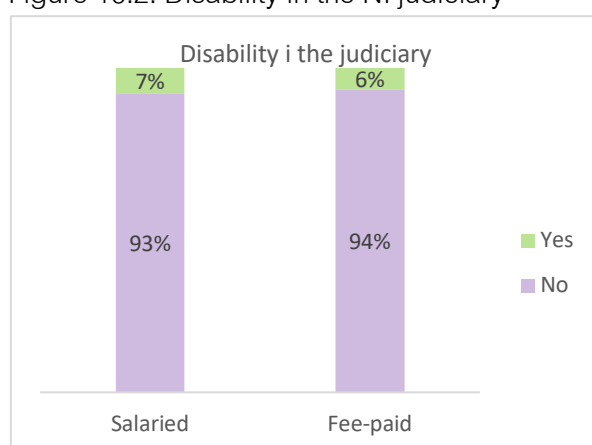
Ethnicity

Table 16.2: Ethnicity of the Northern Ireland judiciary (salaried and fee-paid)

| Ethnicity of Northern Ireland judges | Salaried | Fee-paid |
|---|----------|----------|
| White - Northern Irish/English/Welsh/Scottish/British | 66% | 68% |
| White - Irish | 34% | 32% |
| White - Other | 0% | 0% |
| All other ethnic groups | 0% | 0% |

Disability

Figure 16.2: Disability in the NI judiciary



Secondary education

Table 16.3: Secondary education of the Northern Ireland judiciary

| Secondary education | Salaried | Fee-paid |
|---|----------|----------|
| I attended a UK state school | 74% | 76% |
| I attended a UK independent/fee-paying school | 15% | 9% |
| I attended a UK independent/fee-paying school with a full bursary | 2% | 6% |
| I attended school outside the UK | 0% | 6% |
| Other | 11% | 3% |

Note: Multiple options could be selected

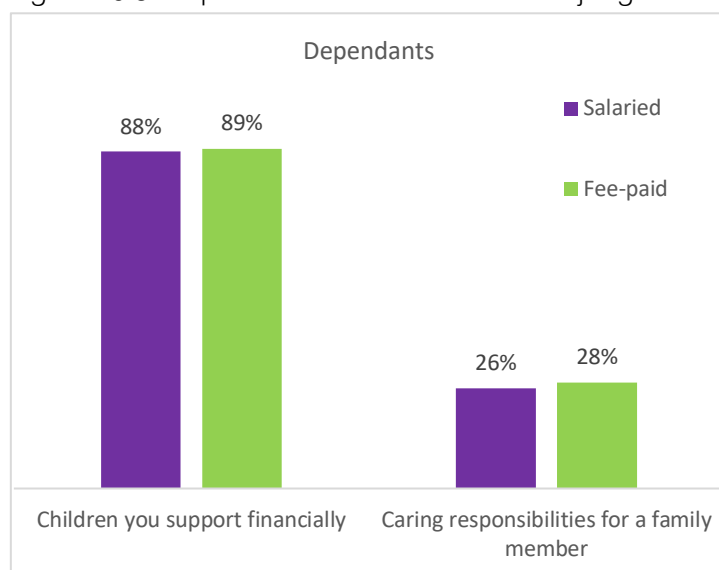
Higher education

Table 16.4: Higher education of the Northern Ireland judiciary

| Higher education | Salaried | Fee-paid |
|--|----------|----------|
| I was part of the first generation of my family to attend university | 62% | 77% |
| I was not part of the first generation of my family to attend university | 38% | 23% |
| I did not attend University | 0% | 0% |
| Other | 0% | 0% |

Dependants

Figure 16.3: Dependants for Northern Ireland judges



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