

2009
Statistics
Centres, Information Line, and Emails

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Centres, Information Line and Emails in 2009

During 2009 FLAC head office received 10,154 calls to its information and referral line. This was an increase of 9.8% on the number of calls received in 2008 (9,250 calls). FLAC also received 1,033 email enquiries during the year.

52 legal advice centres participated in the Data Collection Programme in 2009, five more than 2008. 20 of the participating centres were in county Dublin, with the remaining 32 centres outside the Dublin area. 8,730 data collection forms were returned to FLAC head office in 2009, up from 7,233 the previous year. This included one weekly specialist Family Law clinic, two specialist Employment Law clinics and two specialist Immigration Law clinics.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Centres						
Participating centres	32	31	31	35	47	52
Data Collection Forms	3,317	3,811	4,468	5,323	7,233	8,730
Telephone Information Line			5,786	6,034	9,244	10,154
Emails						1,033

	Centres		Phoneline		Emails	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
January	638	7.3	1642	16.2	n/a	n/a
February	715	8.2				
March	685	7.9	877	8.6	73	7.0
April	710	8.1	814	8.0	16	1.5
May	695	8.0	858	8.4	23	2.2
June	786	9.0	900	8.9	257	24.5
July	877	10.1	975	9.6	177	16.9
August	637	7.3	836	8.2	110	10.5
September	870	10.0	942	9.3	73	7.0
October	802	9.2	908	8.9	86	8.2
November	815	9.3	856	8.4	32	3.1
December	500	5.7	546	5.4	200	19.1
Total	8730	100.0	10154	100.0	1,047	100.0

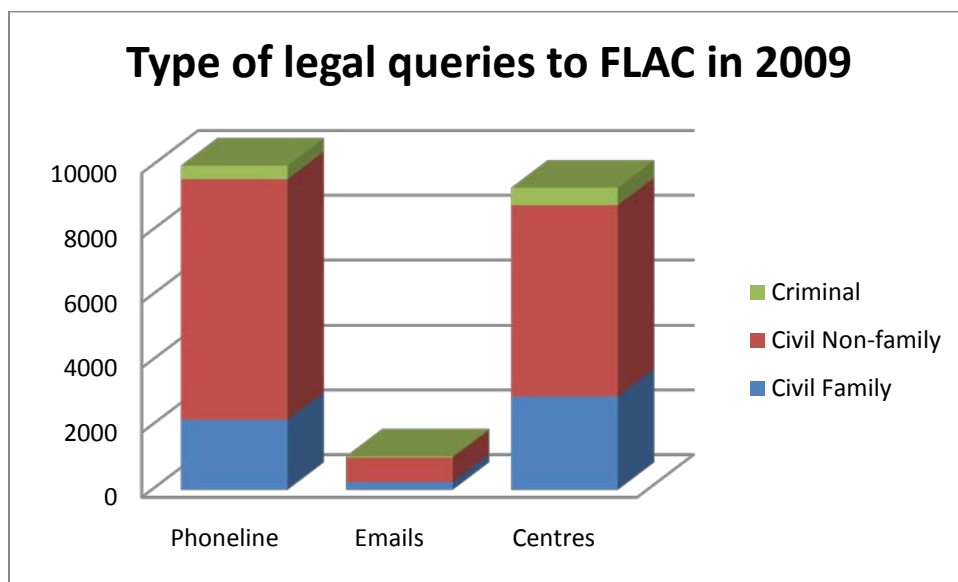
Centres Participating in Data Collection Programme in 2009

Dublin Centres	No. of forms	Percentage of total	Centres outside Dublin	No. of forms	Percentage of total
Aungier Street	152	1.7	Ashbourne	15	.2
Balbriggan	181	2.1	Athlone	119	1.4
Ballyfermot	382	4.4	Athy	16	.2
Ballymun	294	3.4	Ballina	66	.8
Blanchardstown	363	4.2	Bantry	59	.7
Clondalkin	452	5.2	Blackpool	101	1.2
Crumlin	347	4.0	Boyle	27	.3
DeafHear	21	.2	Bray	334	3.8
Dundrum	248	2.8	Castlebar	71	.8
Finglas	671	7.7	Clonmel	150	1.7
Killester/Raheney	239	2.7	Cork (South Mall)	384	4.4
Lucan	341	3.9	Drogheda	12	.1
Meath Street SICCD A	334	3.8	Ennis	247	2.8
Meath Street (Fam&Emp)	427	4.9	Killarney	38	.4
North King Street	464	5.3	Leitrim	79	.9
Pearse Street	135	1.5	Letterkenny	32	.4
Prussia Street	56	.6	Listowel	51	.6
Rathmines	176	2.0	Longford	48	.6
Ringsend	13	.1	Mullingar	89	1.0
Tallaght	516	5.9	Naas	31	.4
Total	5,812	66.4	Navan	97	1.1
			Nenagh	53	.6
			Newbridge	152	1.7
			Portlaoise	27	.3
			Sligo	129	1.5
			Thurles	63	.7
			Tipperary Town	23	.3
			Tralee	104	1.2
			Tuam	32	.4
			Tullamore	105	1.2
			Waterford	60	.7
			Wexford	104	1.2
			Total	2,918	33.6
Total				8730	100.0

Areas of Law discussed on Information Line, Centres and Emails 2009

Across the centres, the telephone information line, and the emails, criminal legal matters account for roughly 5% of all queries, leaving 95% of queries to FLAC civil matters. Criminal queries have been rising in the centres each year, with a 25% increase this year.

Family law matters account for 21% of calls to the telephone line, 23% of emails received, and 31% of queries in the centres. This group has fallen from 25% of calls to the telephone information line in 2006 to 21% last year. Forms from the specialized family law centres showed that 45% of family law queries were in relation to divorce/separation, 20% were regarding maintenance, and 17% custody/access/guardianship.



Roughly 73% of calls to the information line and emails, and 63% to the centres, are civil non-family matters. Within civil non-family matters, employment law is the most frequently discussed topic in the centres (15%). Forms from the specialized Employment law clinics indicate that 30% of employment law queries were about dismissal, 26% were about redundancy, and 16% contract terms. About 7% of employment law queries in the specialized centres were regarding bullying in the work place.

Credit and debt issues accounted for 6% of all calls on the phoneline, 10% of all emails and 5.8% of queries in the centres. 2009 saw a huge jump in the number of debt related calls to the information line, four times as many as 2008.

Data from the immigration legal advice centres show that 36% of queries were about naturalization, 20% about visas and 11% to do with family reunification. Other areas discussed in the immigration centres included work permits, EU Treaty rights, permission to remain, asylum, non-EU citizen entitlements, deportation orders, to name a few.

Area of Law	Phoneline		Emails		Centres	
	Number of calls	% of calls	Number of calls	% of calls	Number of calls	% of calls
Family	2161	21.3	238	23	2886	31
Company Law	14	0.1			41	0.4
Consumer	333	3.3	37	3.6	570	6.1
Contract	169	1.7	11	1.1	50	0.5
Credit & Debt	630	6.2	104	10.1	543	5.8
MABS calls	327	3.2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Employment Law	811	8	103	10	1422	15.2
CIC Employment Calls	170	1.7	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Housing/L&T	272	2.7	49	4.7	538	5.8
Immigration	140	1.4	38	3.7	347	3.7
Legal Aid	555	5.5	55	5.3		
Legal Services	1356	13.4	90	8.7	n/a	n/a
Negligence/PI	154	1.5	12	1.2	407	4.4
Neighbour disputes	44	0.4	8	0.8	154	1.7
Probate	428	4.2	17	1.6	274	2.9
Property	327	3.2	41	4	575	6.2
Social Welfare	139	1.4	29	2.8	196	2.1
Solicitor/Client Issues	414	4.1	22	2.1	96	1.0
Tort	118	1.2	n/a	n/a	2	0.02
Wills/Power of Attorney	206	2	21	2	317	3.4
Other civil matters	815	8	117	11.3	365	4.9
Total Non-family	7422	73.1	754	73	5897	63.2
Criminal	571	5.6	41	4	538	5.7
Total	10154	100	1033	100	9321	100

Trends in Areas of Law discussed on Information Line, 2006-2009

Areas of law discussed on Telephone Information Line		2006	2007	2008	2009	% change
Civil law	Family	25.1%	22.8%	20.7%	21.3%	12.7
	Non-family					
	Children's Rights	-	0.1%	0.2%		+89.5
	Civil	5.3%	5.0%	4.6%	7.6%	
	Company	-	0.8%	0.5%	0.1%	-67.5
	Consumer		5.7%	7.3%	3.3%	-50.7
	Credit & debt	14.4%	1.5%	1.7%	6.2%	+298.7
	MABS debt calls			2.25	3.2%	+5.8
	Contract	0.8%	2.5%	1.7%	1.7%	+9.0
	Discrimination/Equality	-	0.2%	0.1%		
	Employment	6.7%	14.1%	20.1%	8.0%	-56.4
	CIC employment calls			3.34	1.7%	-18.27
	Housing	4.1%	3.0%	3.2%	2.7%	0
	Immigration	2.0%	1.8%	1.8%	1.4%	-15.2
	Legal Aid	1.8%	4.5%	3.5%	5.5%	+70.2
	Legal Services	12.4%	18.1%	10.7%	13.4%	+37.2
	Neighbour disputes				0.4%	
	Personal Injuries		1.3%	2.2%	1.5%	-23.0
	Tort	2.5%	-	1.3%	1.2%	-3.3
	Probate	6.9%	5.4%	5.9%	4.2%	-21.2
	Property	6.2%	3.7%	4.4%	3.2%	-18.9
	Social Welfare	1.1%	0.9%	0.9%	1.4%	+61.6
	Solicitor/Client Issues	3.0%	4.0%	3.8%	4.1%	+18.9
Wills/Power of Attorney				2.0%		
Miscellaneous	2.7%			0.4%		
Total Non-family	69.9%	72.6%	73.9%	73.1%		
Criminal law		5.0%	4.6%	5.7%	5.6%	+8.5
Total legal queries		5,786	6,034	9,244	10154	+9.8

Trends in Areas of Law discussed in Centres, 2005-2009

Areas of law discussed at FLAC centres		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009			
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	% change	
Civil law	Family	1425	37.4	1504	33.7	1,741	32.7	2438	31.5	2886	31.0%	+18.4	
	Non-family	Employment Law	343	9	455	10.2	508	9.5	1094	14.1	1422	15.2%	+29.6
		Succession/Probate	342	9	395	8.8	393	7.4	275	3.6	274	2.9%	-0.4
		Property	288	7.6	389	8.7	436	8.2	439	5.7	575	6.2%	+30.9
		Housing/landlord	275	7.2	336	7.5	330	6.2	521	6.7	538	5.8%	+18.4
		Consumer Law	192	5	265	5.9	348	6.5	505	6.5	570	6.1%	+12.9
		Credit and Debt	120	3.1	135	3	153	2.9	259	3.4	543	5.8%	+9.6
		Neighbour Dispute	-	-	-	-	205	3.9	157	2	154	1.7%	-2.0
		Immigration/ Refugee Law	83	2.2	83	1.9	222	4.2	258	3.3	347	3.7%	+34.5
		Negligence/ Personal Injury	-	-	102	2.3	165	3.1	413	5.3	407	4.4%	-1.7
		Wills/ Power of Attorney	1	0.03	13	0.3	14	0.3	268	3.5	317	3.4%	+18.2
		Client-Solicitor Relations	49	1.3	34	0.8	20	0.4	89	1.2	96	1.0%	+7.9
		Social Welfare Law	58	1.5	68	1.5	99	1.9	139	1.8	196	2.1%	+41.0
		Other civil matters	445	11.7	444	9.9	392	7.4	446	5.8	458	4.9%	+2.7
Total non-family	2196	57.6	2719	60.8	3,285	61.7	4863	62.7	5897	63.2%	+21.2		
Criminal law	190	5	245	5.5	297	5.6	432	5.6	538	5.7%	+24.5		
Total legal queries	3811	100	4468	100	5,323	100	7,733	100	9321	100%	+20.5		

Specialist Areas

Family Law

Based on data collection forms returned from specialist family law centres, and from detailed forms from other centres, the breakdown of family law queries in the centres is typically:

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Divorce/Separation	381	45.7
Custody/Access/Guardianship	145	17.4
Domestic Violence	27	3.2
Childcare	9	1.1
Family home	33	4.0
Barring orders/Safety	47	5.6
Maintenance	171	20.5
Other	21	2.5
Total	834	100.0

Other included:

	Frequency
Non-EU Marriage	1
Child abuse	4
Probate	1
Statutory rape of 17 year old	1
Kidnap	1
Nullity	1
Access	1
Wills	1
Enforcement of visitation rights	1
Child abduction	2
Passports	3
Debt between mother and son	1
Pre-Nup	2
Children with special needs	1
Child benefit	1
Recognition of marriage in another jurisdiction	1
Issues with birthcerts	1

Employment Law

Based on data collection forms returned from specialist employment law centres, and from detailed forms from other centres, the breakdown of employment law queries in the centres is typically:

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Dismissal	153	30.2
Discrimination	16	3.2
Contract terms	80	15.9
Redundancy	132	25.8
Other	127	25.0
Total	508	100.0

Other included:

	Frequency
Payment of Wages Act 1991	26
Problems with management	2
Bullying	38
Out of work after serious illness	1
Sick leave - accident at work	18
Termination & notice period	1
Pension	7
Sexual Harassment	4
Withdrawal of notice	1
Disciplinary Procedures	16
Social Welfare	2
Maternity Leave	3
Grievance Procedure	11
Tax	2
Industrial Relations	1
Union Membership	1
Defamation	1
Commercial tenancy dispute	1
Income Continuance Policy	1
Transfer of Undertakings	1
Employment Reference	1

Immigration Law

Based on data collection forms returned from specialist immigration law centres, and from detailed forms from other centres, the breakdown of immigration law queries in the centres is typically:

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Family Re-unification	18	11.0
Visas	32	19.6
Naturalisation	59	36.2
Other	54	33.1
Total	163	100.0

Other included:

	Frequency
Non-EU citizen entitlements	4
EU Treaty Rights	8
Work permit	12
Leave to Remain	3
Asylum	5
Permission to remain	6
Deportation Order	3
Passport	3
EU residency	2
Refugee	1
Entitlements of child to Irish citizenship	3
University matters	3
International Student Permission	3
Habitual Residence Condition	1
Voluntary Repatriation	1
Wants to marry Irish citizen	1

Proportion of Clients who already engaged a solicitor

8% of callers to FLAC clinics have already engaged a solicitor in relation to their legal query.

	Frequency	Percent
No	7965	91.2
Yes	688	7.9
Not recorded	77	.9
Total	8730	100.0

Client Referrals

Where further legal advice or representation is needed, FLAC advisors make referrals to appropriate agencies. In 2009, 5,168 (59%) clients were referred on to another body.

	Centres		Phoneline	
	No.	%	No.	%
Legal Aid Board	1727	20.0	953	9.4
Private Solicitor	2104	24.1	556	5.5
Family Mediation	271	3.1	65	0.6
MABS	170	1.9	180	1.8
FLAC	45*	0.5	3307^	32.6
CIC	113	1.3	726	7.1
District Court	317	3.6	204	2
Other	1183	13.4	1447	14.3

*FLAC head office

^FLAC centre

Client referrals

