

**2010
Statistics
Centres, Information Line, and Emails**

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Centres, Information Line and Emails in 2010

FLAC offers first-stop legal information to the public via its telephone information and referral line. During 2010 FLAC received roughly 11,692 calls, compared with 10,154 in 2009, an increase of 15%. FLAC also received 1,187 email enquiries during the year, an increase of 14.9% on 2009.

FLAC also operates legal advice centres, located all around the country and usually on the premises of the local Citizens Information Centre, where you can talk to a volunteer solicitor or barrister face-to-face about your legal query. 59 of these centres provided FLAC with details of these queries in 2010, seven more than 2009. 24 of the participating centres were in county Dublin, with the remaining 35 centres outside the Dublin area. 10,293 data collection forms were returned to FLAC head office in 2010, up from 8,730 the previous year. This included two weekly specialist Family Law clinics, two specialist Employment Law clinics and two specialist Immigration Law clinics.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Centres							
Participating centres	32	31	31	35	47	52	59
Data Collection Forms	3,317	3,811	4,468	5,323	7,233	8,730	10,293
Telephone Information Line			5,786	6,034	9,244	10,154	11,692
Emails						1,033	1,187

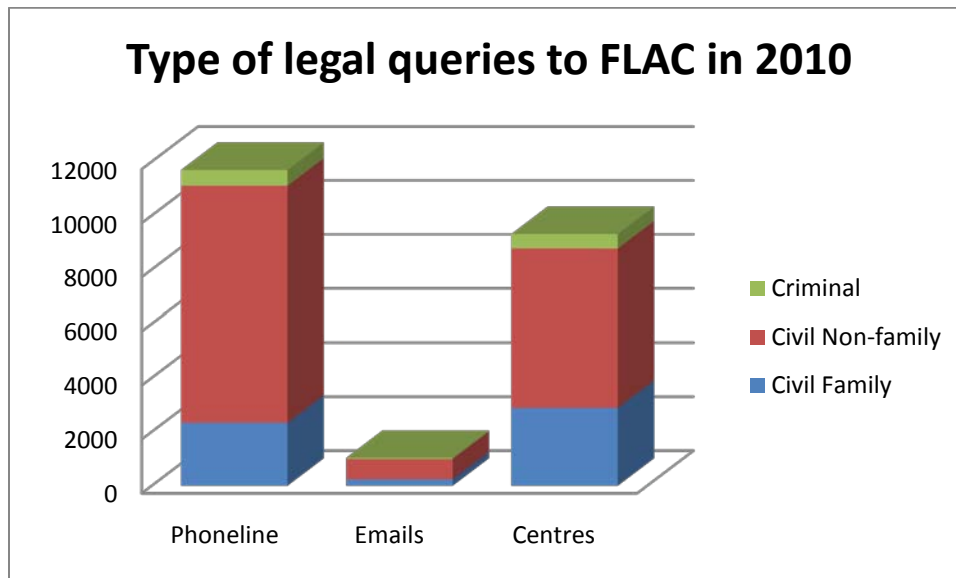
	Centres		Phoneline		Emails	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
January	644	6.3	844	7.22	133	11.20
February	964	9.4	894	7.65	131	11.04
March	897	8.7	951	8.13	128	10.78
April	792	7.7	871	7.45	108	9.10
May	846	8.2	897	7.67	95	8.00
June	942	9.2	819	7.00	129	10.87
July	993	9.7	843	7.21	141	11.88
August	843	8.2	878	7.51	91	7.67
September	1112	10.7	1299	11.11	59	4.97
October	911	8.9	1229	10.51	56	4.72
November	978	9.5	1406	12.03	63	5.31
December	371	3.6	761	6.51	53	4.47
Total	10293	100.0	11692	100.00	1187	100.00

Centres Participating in Data Collection Programme in 2010

Dublin Centres	No. of forms	Percentage of total	Centres outside Dublin	No. of forms	Percentage of total
Aungier Street	215	2.1	Ashbourne	15	.1
Balbriggan	174	1.7	Athlone	130	1.3
Ballyfermot	365	3.5	Athy	16	.2
Ballymun	255	2.5	Ballina	60	.6
Blanchardstown	405	3.9	Bantry	60	.6
Clondalkin	480	4.7	Blackpool	264	2.6
Crumlin	367	3.6	Boyle	27	.3
DeafHear	17	.2	Bray	328	3.2
Dundrum	241	2.3	Castlebar	52	.5
Finglas	879	8.5	Clonmel	168	1.6
Lucan	340	3.3	Cork South Mall	335	3.3
Meath Street Fam&Emp	488	4.7	Drogheda	35	.3
Meath Street SICEDA	236	2.3	Ennis	443	4.3
North King Street	457	4.4	Killarney	42	.4
Pearse Street	180	1.8	Leitrim	70	.7
Prussia Street	107	1.0	Letterkenny	36	.4
Raheny	251	2.4	Listowel	47	.5
Rathmines	208	2.0	Longford	52	.5
Ringsend	87	.8	Mullingar	88	.9
Tallaght	563	5.5	Naas	58	.6
Sean McDermott Street	159	1.5	Navan	120	1.2
O'Connell Street	149	1.4	Nenagh	58	.6
Swords	47	.5	Newbridge	158	1.5
Aungier Street Employment centre	4	.0	Sligo	138	1.3
Total	6673	64.80	Thurles	80	.8
			Tipperary Town	40	.4
			Tralee	119	1.2
			Tuam	61	.6
			Tullamore	126	1.2
			Waterford	197	1.9
			Wexford	91	.9
			Shannon	7	.1
			NUIG	61	.6
			Kilrush	29	.3
			UCC FLAC	9	.1
			Total	3620	35.20

Areas of Law discussed on Information Line, Centres and Emails 2010

Criminal legal queries account for 5-6% of queries on the phone line and in the centres, leaving roughly 94% of queries to FLAC civil matters. Family law matters account for 20% of calls to the telephone line, 27% of emails received, and 30% of queries in the centres. Forms from the specialized family law centres showed that 42% of family law queries were in relation to divorce/separation, 18% were regarding maintenance, and 22% custody/access/guardianship. This is a slight change on 2009 when the number of maintenance calls outnumbered custody/access/guardianship calls.



Within non-family civil matters, debt was the most frequently discussed topic on the telephone information line in 2010. Credit and debt issues accounted for 8% of all calls on the phone line (up from 6% the previous year), 9% of all emails and 7% of queries in the centres. 2010 saw a 45% increase in the number of debt related calls to the telephone information line.

FLAC information line also saw a rise in the number of employment, social welfare, consumer, housing and neighbor dispute calls.

Employment law is the most frequently discussed topic in the centres (14%). Forms from the specialized Employment law clinics indicate that 25% of employment law queries were about dismissal, 17% were about redundancy, and 22% contract terms. About 6% of employment law queries in the specialized centres were regarding bullying in the work place.

Data from the immigration legal advice centres show that 37% of queries were about naturalization, 19% about visas and 10% to do with family reunification. These figures are very consistent with 2009. 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.

Type of Legal Queries to FLAC in 2010

Area of Law	Phoneline		Emails		Centres	
	Number of calls	% of calls	Number of calls	% of calls	Number of calls	% of calls
Family	2335	19.97	322	27.1	3347	30.51
Consumer	401	3.43	63	5.3	680	6.20
Contract	154	1.32	19	1.6	n/a	n/a
Credit & Debt	912	7.80	101	8.5	787	7.16
MABS calls	291	2.49	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Employment Law	842	7.20	136	11.5	1558	14.20
CIC Employment Calls	116	0.99	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Housing/L&T	300	2.57	46	3.9	671	6.12
Immigration	140	1.20	43	3.6	402	3.66
Legal Aid	400	3.42	35	2.9	n/a	n/a
Legal Services	3100	26.51	97	8.2	n/a	n/a
Negligence/PI	117	1.00	35	2.9	557	5.07
Neighbour disputes	58	0.50	8	0.7	140	1.26
Probate	259	2.22	12	1.0	308	2.81
Property	276	2.36	47	4.0	556	5.05
Social Welfare	187	1.60	47	4.0	289	2.63
Solicitor/Client Issues	360	3.08	20	1.7	107	0.98
Tort	113	0.97	7	0.6	n/a	n/a
Wills/Power of Attorney	251	2.15	26	2.2	433	3.95
Other civil matters	494	4.23	63	5.3	489	4.45
Total Non-family	8771	75.02	805	67.8	6975	63.52
Criminal	586	5.01	60	5.1	655	5.97
Total	11692	100	1187	100	10979	100.00

Trends in Areas of Law discussed on Information Line, 2006-2010

Areas of law discussed on Telephone Information Line		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	% change 09to10
Civil law	Family	25.1%	22.8%	20.7%	21.3%	20.0%	8.1%
	Non-family						
	Children's Rights	-	0.1%	0.2%			
	Civil	5.3%	5.0%	4.6%	7.6%	4.2%	-36.1%
	Company	-	0.8%	0.5%	0.1%		
	Consumer		5.7%	7.3%	3.3%	3.4%	20.4%
	Credit & debt	14.4%	1.5%	1.7%	6.2%	7.8%	44.8%
	MABS debt calls			2.25	3.2%	2.5%	-11.0%
	Contract	0.8%	2.5%	1.7%	1.7%	1.3%	-8.9%
	Discrimination/Equality	-	0.2%	0.1%			
	Employment	6.7%	14.1%	20.1%	8.0%	7.2%	3.8%
	CIC employment calls			3.34	1.7%	1.0%	-31.8%
	Housing	4.1%	3.0%	3.2%	2.7%	2.6%	10.3%
	Immigration	2.0%	1.8%	1.8%	1.4%	1.2%	0.0%
	Legal Aid	1.8%	4.5%	3.5%	5.5%	3.4%	-27.9%
	Legal Services	12.4%	18.1%	10.7%	13.4%	26.5%	128.6%
	Neighbour disputes				0.4%	0.5%	31.8%
	Negligence/Personal Injuries		1.3%	2.2%	1.5%	1.0%	-24.0%
	Tort	2.5%	-	1.3%	1.2%	1.0%	-4.2%
	Probate	6.9%	5.4%	5.9%	4.2%	2.2%	-39.5%
	Property	6.2%	3.7%	4.4%	3.2%	2.3%	-15.6%
	Social Welfare	1.1%	0.9%	0.9%	1.4%	1.6%	34.5%
	Solicitor/Client Issues	3.0%	4.0%	3.8%	4.1%	3.1%	-13.0%
Wills/Power of Attorney				2.0%	2.2%		
Miscellaneous	2.7%			0.4%			
Total Non-family	69.9%	72.6%	73.9%	73.1%	75.1%	-8.5%	
Criminal law	5.0%	4.6%	5.7%	5.6%	5.0%	2.6%	
Total legal queries	5,786	6,034	9,244	10,154	11,692	-4.4%	

Trends in Areas of Law discussed in Centres, 2005-2010

Areas of law discussed at FLAC centres		2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		% change 09to10	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%		
Civil law	Family	1504	33.7	1,741	32.7	2438	31.5	2886	31.0	3347	30.5	15.9	
	Non-family	Employment Law	455	10.2	508	9.5	1094	14.1	1422	15.2	1558	14.2	9.8
		Succession/Probate	395	8.8	393	7.4	275	3.6	274	2.9	308	2.8	12.4
		Property	389	8.7	436	8.2	439	5.7	575	6.2	556	5.1	-3.7
		Housing/landlord	336	7.5	330	6.2	521	6.7	538	5.8	671	6.1	24.7
		Consumer Law	265	5.9	348	6.5	505	6.5	570	6.1	680	6.2	19.3
		Credit and Debt	135	3	153	2.9	259	3.4	543	5.8	787	7.2	44.6
		Neighbour Dispute	-	-	205	3.9	157	2.0	154	1.7	140	1.3	-10.4
		Immigration/ Refugee Law	83	1.9	222	4.2	258	3.3	347	3.7	402	3.7	15.6
		Negligence/ Personal Injury	102	2.3	165	3.1	413	5.3	407	4.4	557	5.1	36.9
		Wills/ Power of Attorney	13	0.3	14	0.3	268	3.5	317	3.4	433	4.0	36.6
		Client-Solicitor Relations	34	0.8	20	0.4	89	1.2	96	1.0	107	1.0	11.5
		Social Welfare Law	68	1.5	99	1.9	139	1.8	196	2.1	289	2.6	46.9
		Other civil matters	444	9.9	392	7.4	446	5.8	458	4.9	489	4.5	6.6
Total non-family	2719	60.8	3,285	61.7	4863	62.7	5897	63.2	6975	63.5	18.2		
Criminal law		245	5.5	297	5.6	432	5.6	538	5.7	655	6.0	21.7	
Total legal queries		4468	100	5,323	100	7,733	100	9321	100	10979	100	17.7	

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	843	42.1
Custody/Access/Guardianship	458	22.9
Domestic Violence	33	1.6
Childcare	30	1.5
Family home	91	4.5
Barring orders/Safety	95	4.7
Maintenance	366	18.3
Other	88	4.4
Total	2004	100.0

Other included:

	Frequency		Frequency
Legal Aid means test query	1	Release from joint mortgage	2
Adoption	14	Care of elderly parent	2
Family dispute over will	2	Change of name by deed poll	1
Family dispute	2	Medical Law and consent	1
Swearing of documents	1	Same sex couple cannot adopt	1
Sham marriage	3	Power of attorney	2
Paternity test	9	Hague Convention - removal of children	1
Sale of property if ex partner still on deeds	4	partner terminally ill - client worried about obligation to partners children	1
Spouse has gambling problem	2	issue with father of child coming to stay unannounced without invitation	1
Birth registration	1	client wants to change child's birth certificate	1
Alleged child neglect	1	Nullity of marriage	9
Child abduction	6	Dispute with siblings re mothers pension	1
Cohabitation after relationship break down	2	Passports	3
Re-register surname of children	2	Civil Partnership Act	1
Marriage registration	1	Child abuse allegation	5
Wants husband in jail to stop writing to son	1	Missing person - husband	1
Change child's birth cert to include fathers name	2	Ward of Court	1
Kidnapping	1	Appeal on point of law	1
Marriage law in Lebanon	1	Change birth cert	1
Legal Partnership	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	228	25.1
Discrimination	37	4.1
Contract terms	202	22.2
Redundancy	162	17.8
Other	280	30.8
Total	909	100.0

Other included:

	Frequency		Frequency
Payment of Wages Act 1991	67	Employers behaviour	1
Pension	12	Unfavorable reference - defamation	1
Working conditions	1	Psychological damage resulting from 2 raids at post office where she works	1
Grievance Procedures	42	Strike/picket Labour Court Determination	1
Sick leave	12	Suspension from work	7
Accident at work	14	Looking for EAT decision to be enforced	1
Bullying	55	employer non compliant with PRSI and tax	2
Work related stress	1	Client accused of theft at work	1
Social Insurance fraud	1	Public Holidays	1
Disciplinary procedures	33	Tax	1
Not allowed to bring personal items to work	1	help completing EAT form	1
Maternity leave	16	False accusation	2
No pay slip	1	Client saw her job advertised in the paper	1
PRSI contributions	1	Harassment by employer outside of work hours	1
Harassment	6	Legal entitlement to promotion	1
Purse stolen at work	1	Company in administration	1
Right to severance pay	1	Health and Safety	3
Transfer of undertakings	2	Liquidation query	1
Illness benefit	1	temporary lay-off	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	24	10.1
Visas	47	19.7
Naturalisation	88	37.0
Other	79	33.2
Total	238	100.0

Other included:

	Frequency		Frequency
Non-EU citizen entitlements	25	Seeking civil marriage certificate	1
Work permit	19	status of children	1
Leave to remain	4	Stamp 4 basis de facto re 'ship with Irish nat.	3
Refugee	5	Permission to remain	2
Problem with immigration documents	1	Change of name	1
EU Treaty Rights	10	minor child in de facto situation	1
Judicial Review	1	Stateless child	1
Deportation	3	Long term residency	1
HRC	3	Refugee wanting to get married	1
Verification of immigration documents	1	residency if client divorces EU spouse	1
Regularisation of status	1	Rights of spouse in Ireland	1
Change of status	1	Separated so wants to change from Stamp to Stamp 4 in her own right	1
Renewal of status	2	Certifying of documents	1
Asylum	1	SWA refused	1
Rights of Romanian nationals	1	Damaged passport	1
Student permission	2	Migrant working illegally	1
Irish citizen child	1	Defacto relationship	1
Break up of marriage to Irish citizen	2		

Proportion of Clients who already engaged a solicitor

Roughly 5% of callers to FLAC clinics have already engaged a solicitor in relation to their legal query.

	Frequency	Percent
No	9788	95.1
Yes	482	4.6
Not recorded	23	.2
Total	10293	100.0

Client Referrals

Where further legal advice or representation is needed, FLAC advisors make referrals to appropriate agencies. In 2010, 5533 (54%) clients to FLAC centres were referred on to another body.

	Centres		Phoneline	
	No.	%	No.	%
Legal Aid Board	1830	17.8	978	10.1
Private Solicitor	2260	21.9	318	3.3
Family Mediation	261	2.5	62	0.6
MABS	224	2.2	201	2.1
FLAC	50*	0.5	6656^	56.9
CIC	148	1.4	456	4.7
District Court	368	3.6	214	2.2
Other	1147	11.2	1541	15.9

*FLAC head office

^FLAC centre

Client Referrals 2010

