



2024: The Year in Review

U.S. District Court District of Colorado

N. Reid Neureiter

United States Magistrate Judge

(with the able assistance of intern Charlotte Renner
and Leigh Roberson of the Clerk's Office)

Active District Judges

Full panel of active Article III Judges:

- Chief Judge Philip A. Brimmer – **2008**
- Judge Daniel D. Domenico – **2019**
- Judge Regina M. Rodriguez – **2021**
- Judge Charlotte N. Sweeney – **2022**
- Judge Nina Y. Wang – **2022**
- Judge Gordan P. Gallagher, sits in Grand Junction – **2023**
- Judge S. Kato Crews – **January 2024**

Senior District Judges

Eight senior Article III Judges:

- Judge John L. Kane
- Judge Lewis T. Babcock – pro se docket review
- Judge Marcia S. Krieger
- Judge Robert E. Blackburn
- Judge Christine M. Arguello – Inactive **in Sept. 2025**
- Judge William J. Martinez
- Judge R. Brooke Jackson
- Judge Raymond P. Moore

Appellate Judges Sitting by Designation

- Judge Timothy M. Tymkovich – 10th Circuit Judge
- Judge David M. Ebel – 10th Circuit Senior Judge

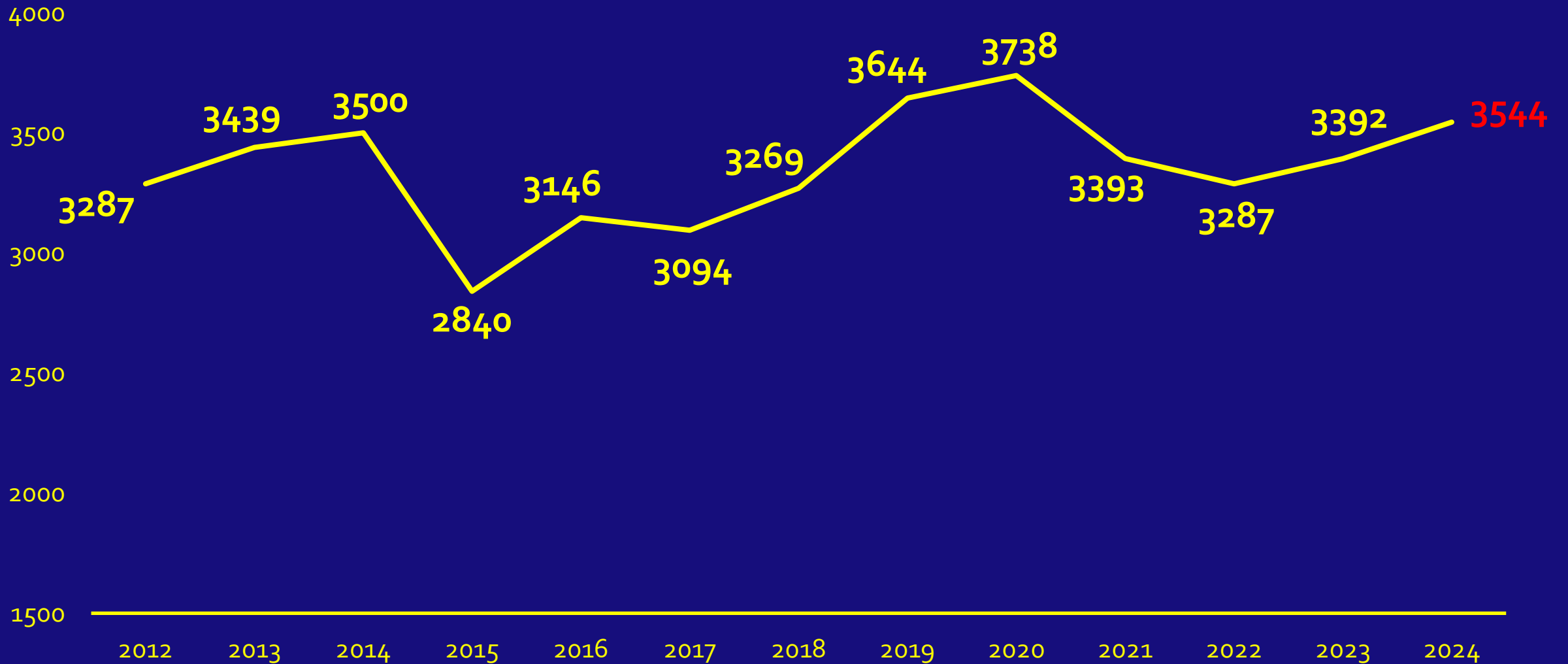
Magistrate Judges

- Seven full-time Magistrate Judges:
- Chief Magistrate Judge Scott T. Varholak – **2016**
- Magistrate Judge N. Reid Neureiter – **2018**
- Magistrate Judge Maritza Dominguez Braswell – **2022**
- Magistrate Judge Susan Prose – **2023**
- Magistrate Judge Kathryn A. Starnella – **2023**
- Magistrate Judge Timothy P. O'Hara – **October 2024, succeeding Judge Crews**
- Magistrate Judge Cyrus Y. Chung – **January 2025, succeeding Magistrate Judge Hegarty**

Part-time Magistrate Judges

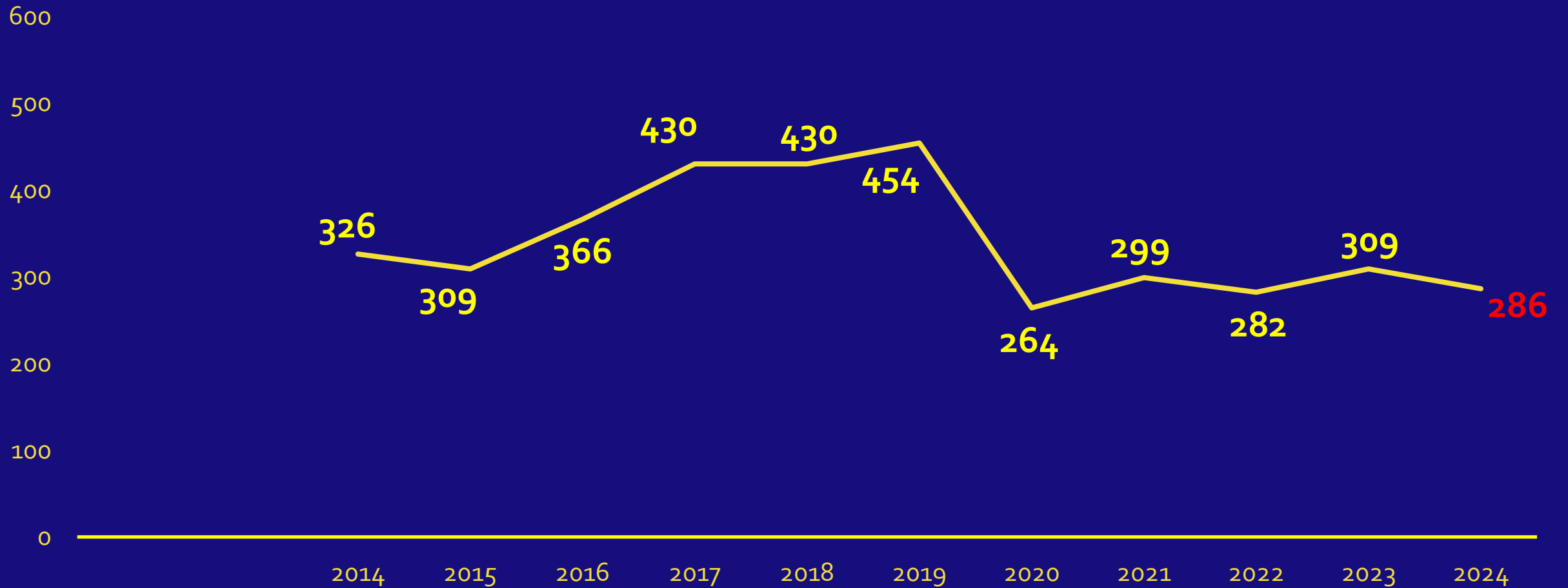
- Two part-time Magistrate Judges:
- Magistrate Judge James M. Candelaria, sits in Durango – **2019**
- Magistrate Judge Richard T. Gurley, sits in Grand Junction – **June 2024**

Civil Cases Filed in D. Colo.



New Felony Cases Filed in D. Colo.

(not counting transfers of jurisdiction of supervised release/probation)



Caseload of D. Colo. compared with other Districts

- 569 weighted civil filings per judgeship – sixth highest in the country, highest in the circuit
- 91 weighted criminal filings per judgeship – lowest in the circuit
- 663 weighted filings per judgeship (counting only the seven Article III judges), including civil and criminal – 12th highest in the country out of 91 districts, highest in the circuit
- *data obtained from United States Courts Data and News

What is a “weighted filing?”

- The demands on judges' time are largely a function of both the number and complexity of the cases on their dockets.
- To measure the case-related workload of district court judges, the Judicial Conference has adopted weighted case filings. Purpose: create a measure of the average judge time that a specific number and mix of cases filed in a district court would require.
- Example, in the 2004 case weights--which are still in use--drug possession cases are weighted at 0.86, while civil copyright and trademark cases are weighted at 2.12.
- The total annual weighted filings for a district are determined by summing the case weight associated with all the cases filed in the district during the year. A weighted case filing per authorized judgeship is the total annual weighted filings divided by the total number of authorized judgeships. The Judicial Conference uses weighted filings of 430 or more per authorized judgeship as an indication that a district may need additional judgeships.

Role of Magistrate Judges and Consent

- D.C.COLO.LCivR 72.2: CONSENT JURISDICTION OF A MAGISTRATE JUDGE
- (a) Designation. Under 28 U.S.C. § 636(c)(1) and subject to this rule, a full-time magistrate judge is designated specially to conduct any or all proceedings in any jury or nonjury civil action and order the entry of judgment in the case.

Consent, cont.

- (c) Unanimous Consent; Determination. To consent to the jurisdiction of a magistrate judge under 28 U.S.C. § 636(c), all parties shall complete and file a Consent/Non-Consent to United States Magistrate Judge Jurisdiction form [HERE](#). Unless otherwise ordered by the assigned district judge, written consent to proceed before a magistrate judge must be filed no later than (1) seven days before the scheduling conference, if any; or (2) 45 days after the filing of the first response, other than an answer, to the operative complaint, whichever is earlier. When there is such consent, the magistrate judge shall forthwith notify the assigned district judge, who will then determine whether to enter an order of reference under 28 U.S.C. § 636(c).

Consent, (dispositive motions)

- D.C.COLO.LCivR 72.3

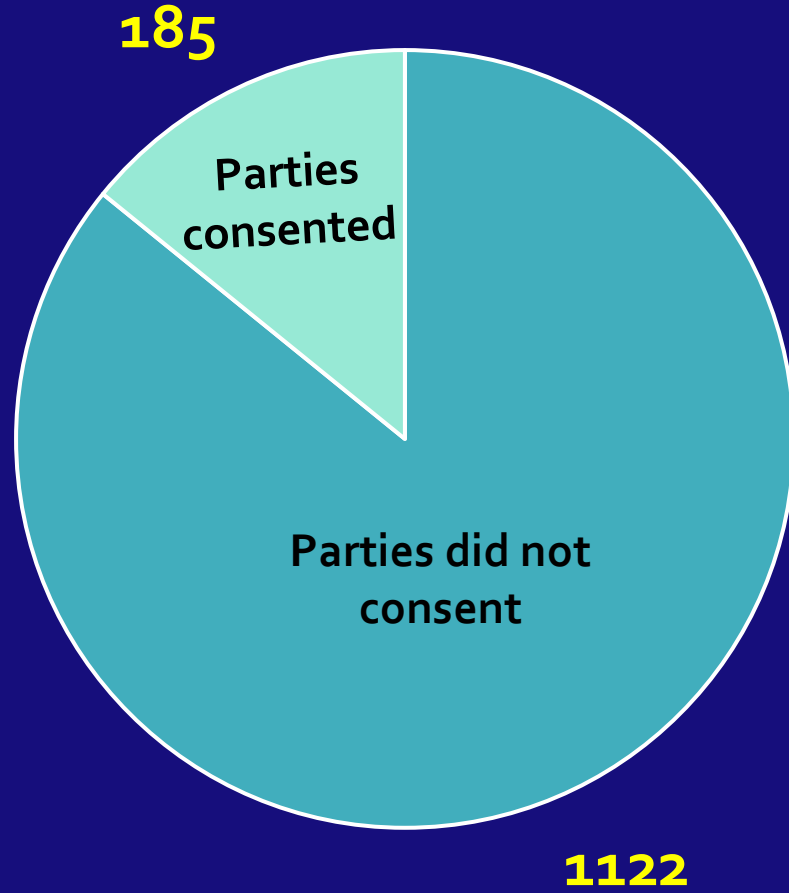
REFERENCE OF A DISPOSITIVE MOTION TO A MAGISTRATE JUDGE

- (a) Designation. A full-time magistrate judge is designated specially to make final determination of a dispositive motion with the unanimous consent of the parties and approval of the assigned district judge. Dispositive motions include motions to amend, to dismiss, for transfer or for change of venue, to remand, for summary judgment, and for partial summary judgment.
- (b) Consent on Notice. The parties may consent to the final determination of a dispositive motion by the assigned magistrate judge by filing a notice of consent. The district judge may enter an order approving the notice.

Consent, (additional parties)

- (e) Additional Parties. Any party added to the action or served after reference to a magistrate judge under this rule shall be notified by the clerk of the right to consent to the exercise of jurisdiction by the magistrate judge under 28 U.S.C. § 636(c). If an added party does not file a consent to proceed before the magistrate judge within 21 days from the date of mailing of the notice, the action shall be returned to the assigned district judge for further proceedings.

Percentage of Direct Draw Consents in 2024



Of 1,307 cases directly assigned to Magistrate Judges, all parties consented in 185 cases

This represents a 13.8% consent rate

Total Consent Percentage

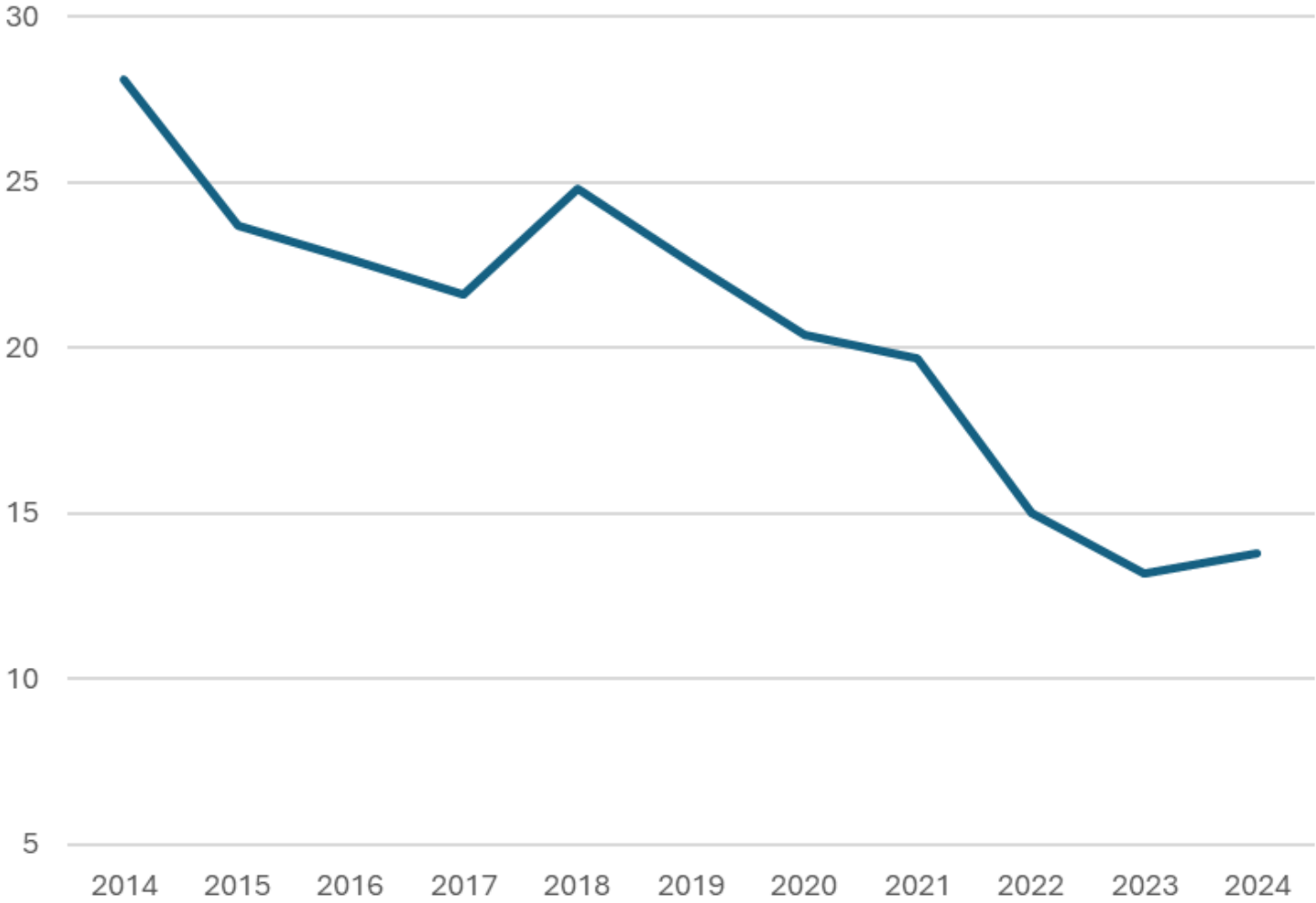
- There were 77 traditional consent cases in 2024
- Including the 185 direct draw consents, these two numbers yielded a 7% consent rate out of total civil case filings

Year	Total MJ CIV PP	Consent achieved	% Consent
2014	1003	282	28.1
2015	911	216	23.7
2016	1071	243	22.7
2017	1174	253	21.6
2018	1023	254	24.8
2019	1419	321	22.6
2020	1643	335	20.4
2021	1444	284	19.7
2022	1017	153	15.0
2023	1323	174	13.2
2024	1344	186	13.8

Consent in direct assigned cases is DECLINING

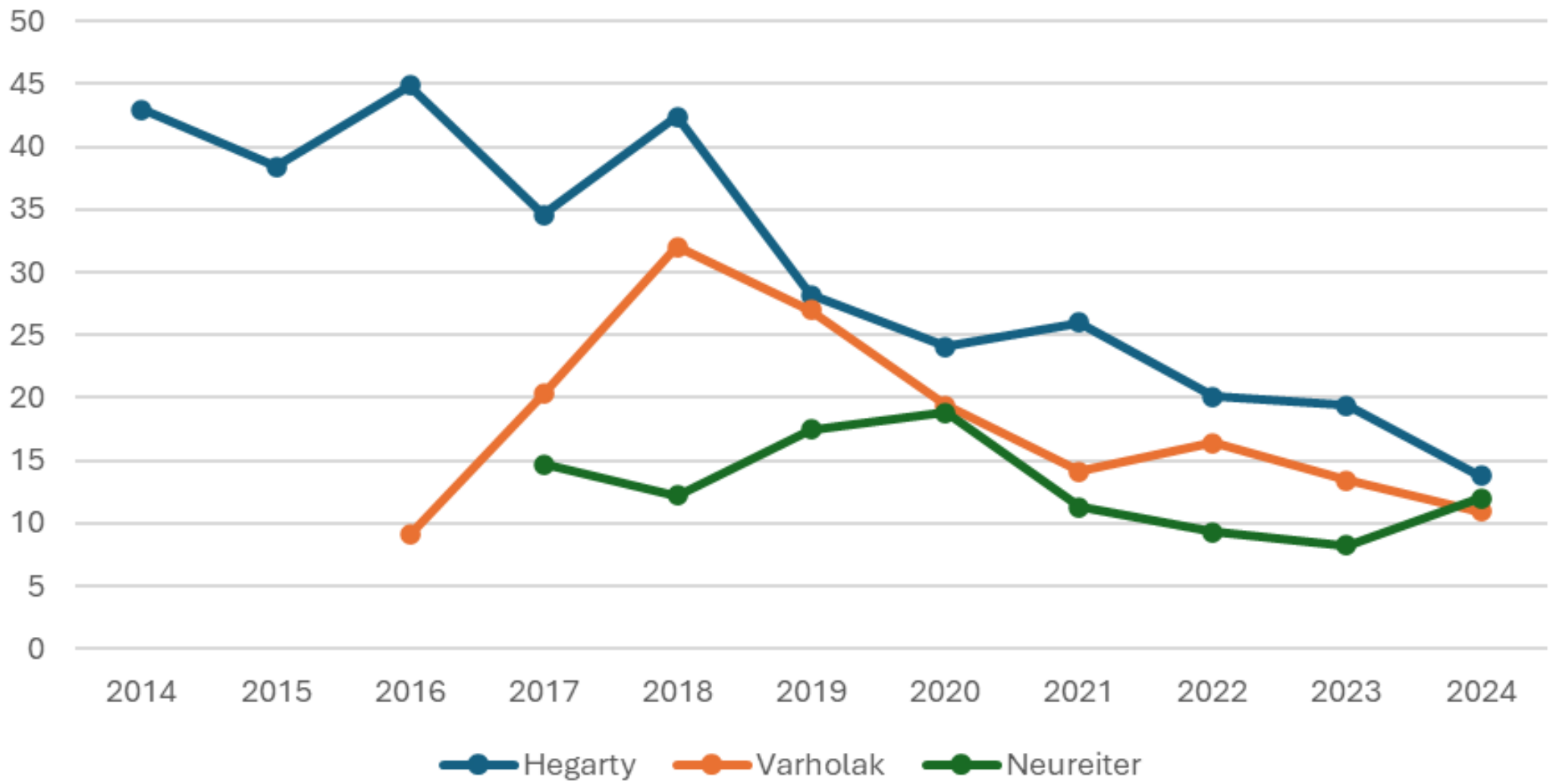
Magistrate Judge Consent Trends

% Magistrate Judge Consent

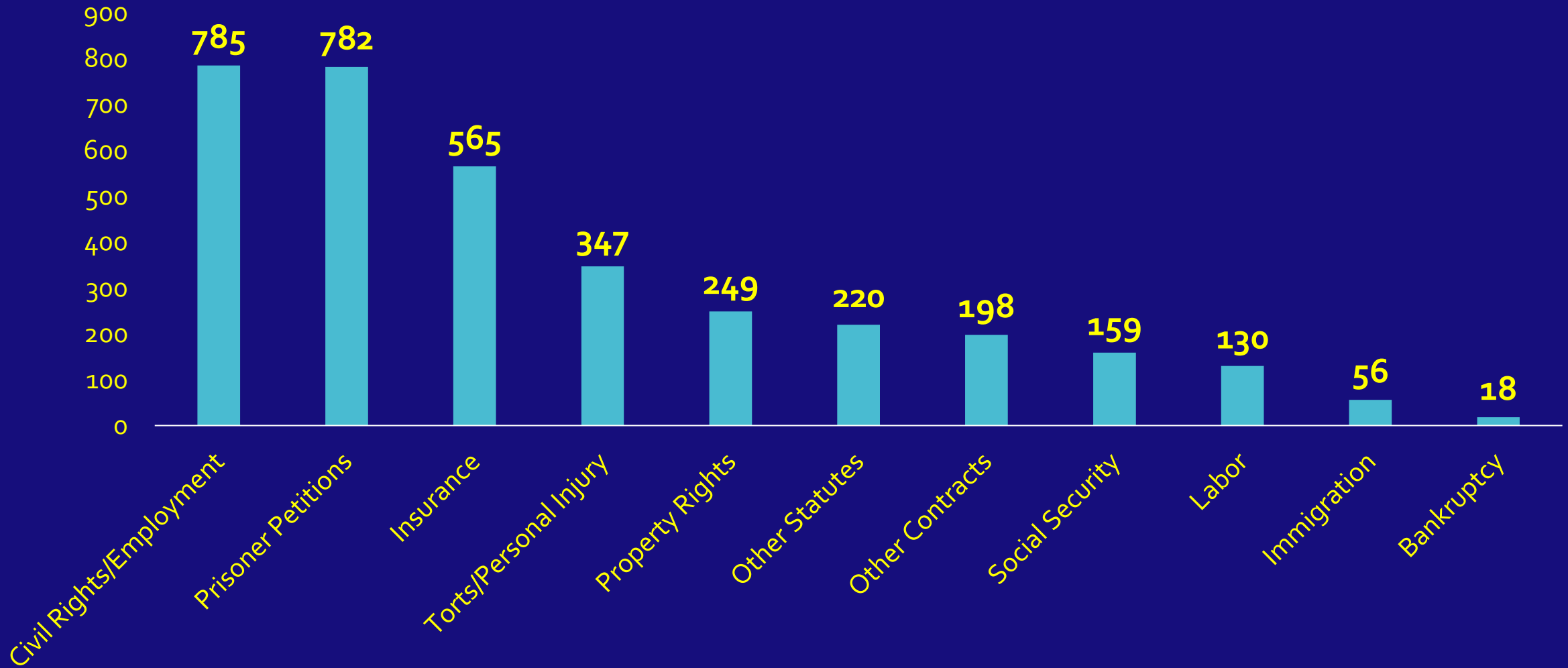


— % Consent

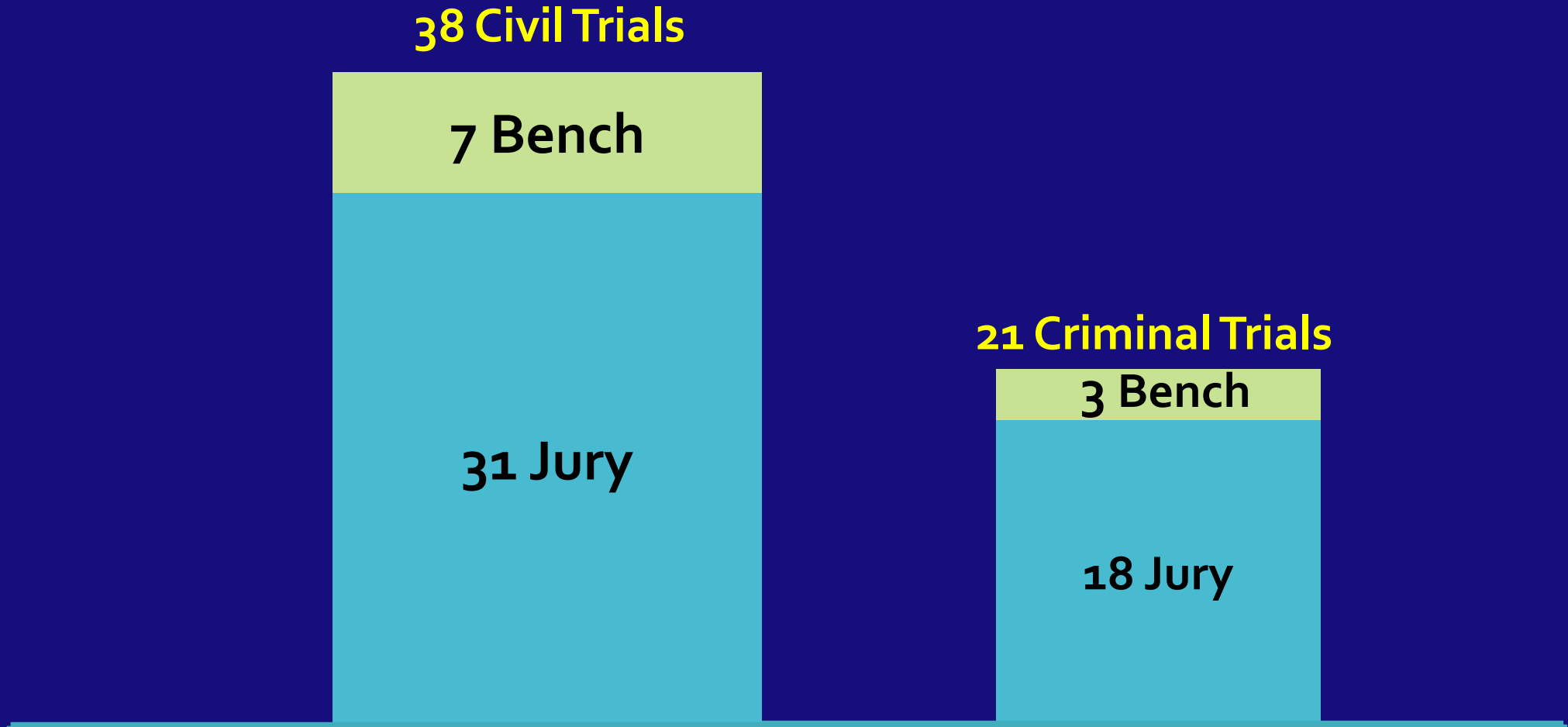
MJ Consent Trends



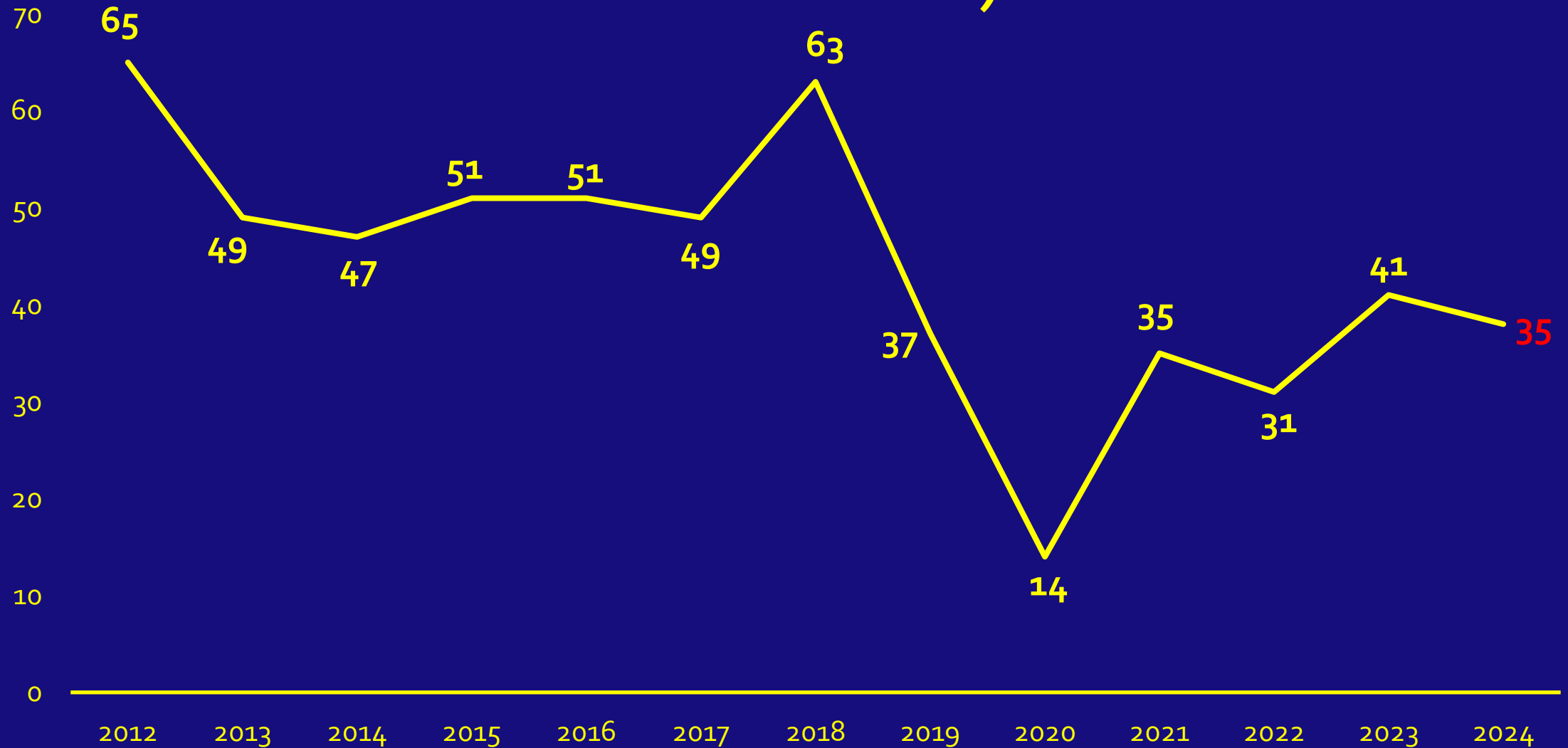
Breakdown of Civil Cases Filed in 2024



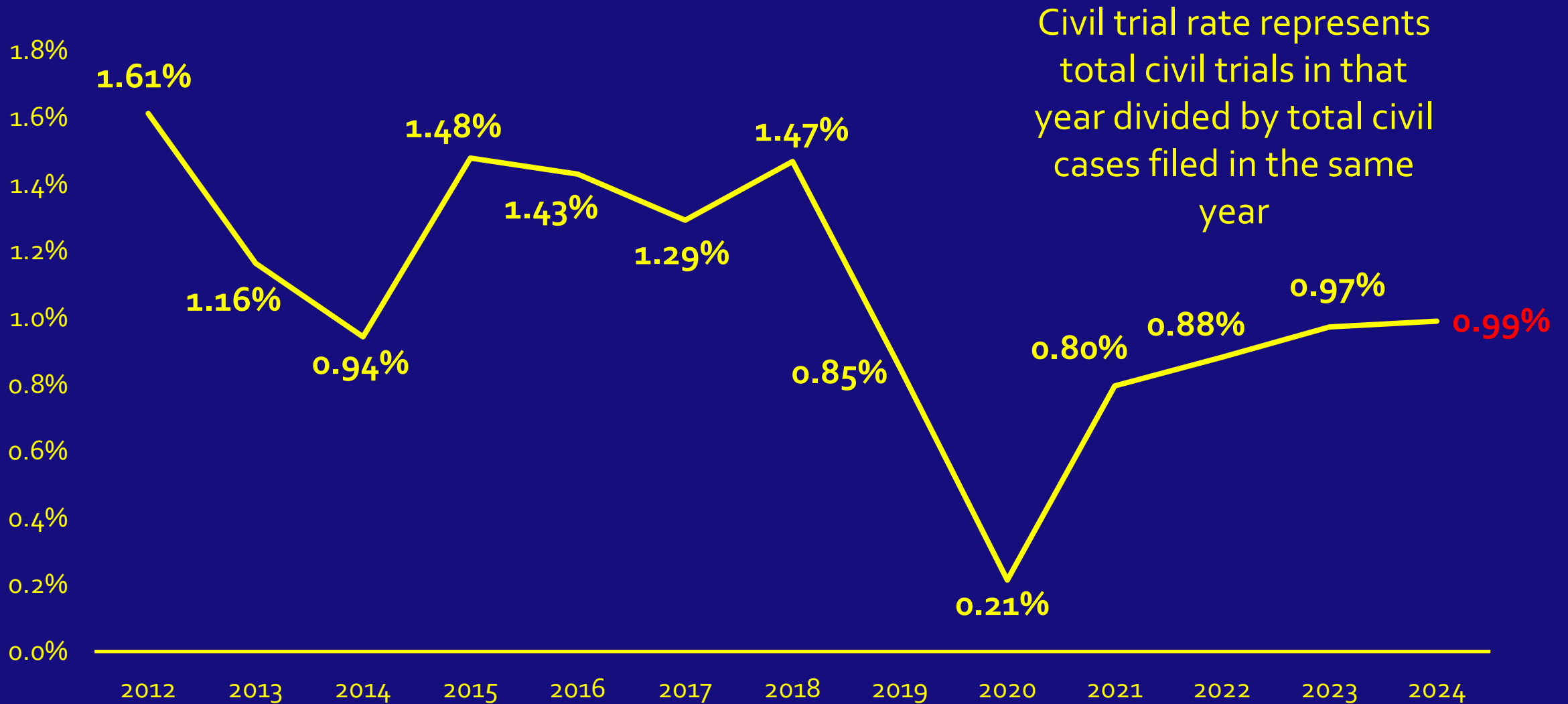
Bench vs Jury Trials in 2024



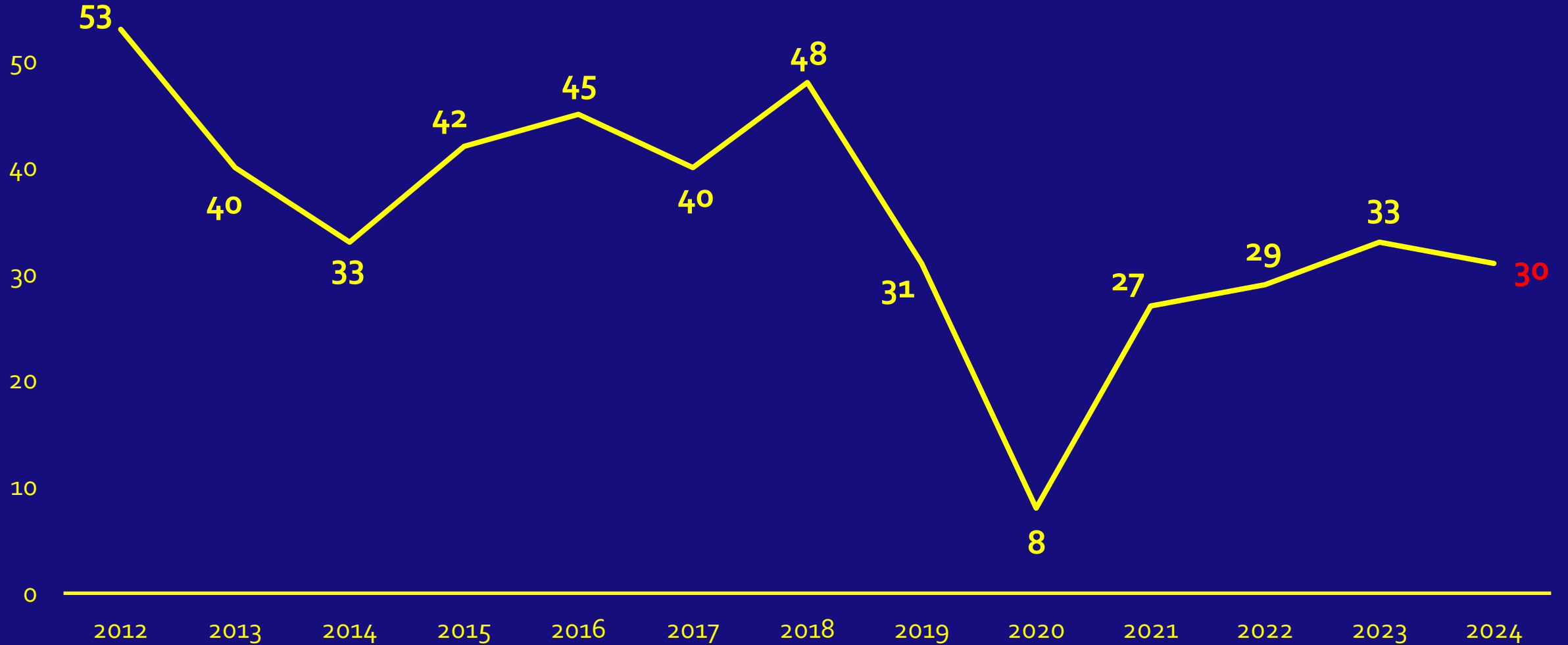
Number of Civil Cases Tried to Verdict (Jury and Bench)



Civil Trial Rate

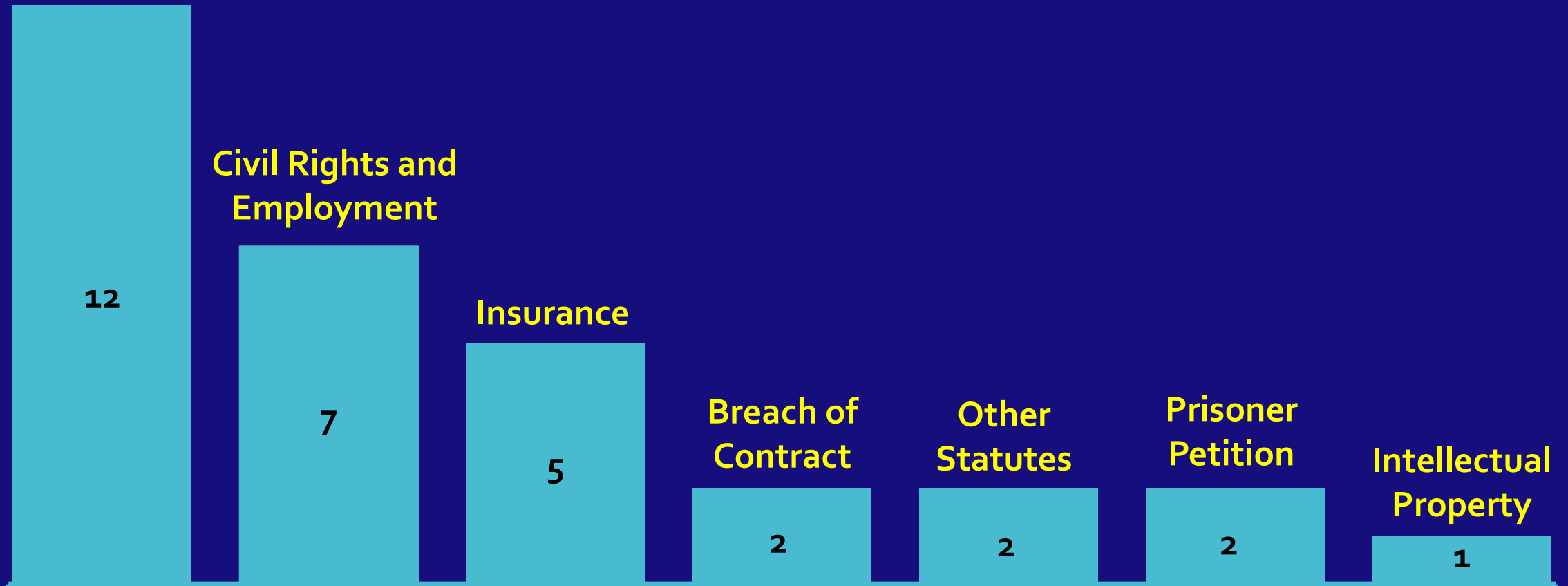


Civil Jury Trials Tried to Verdict

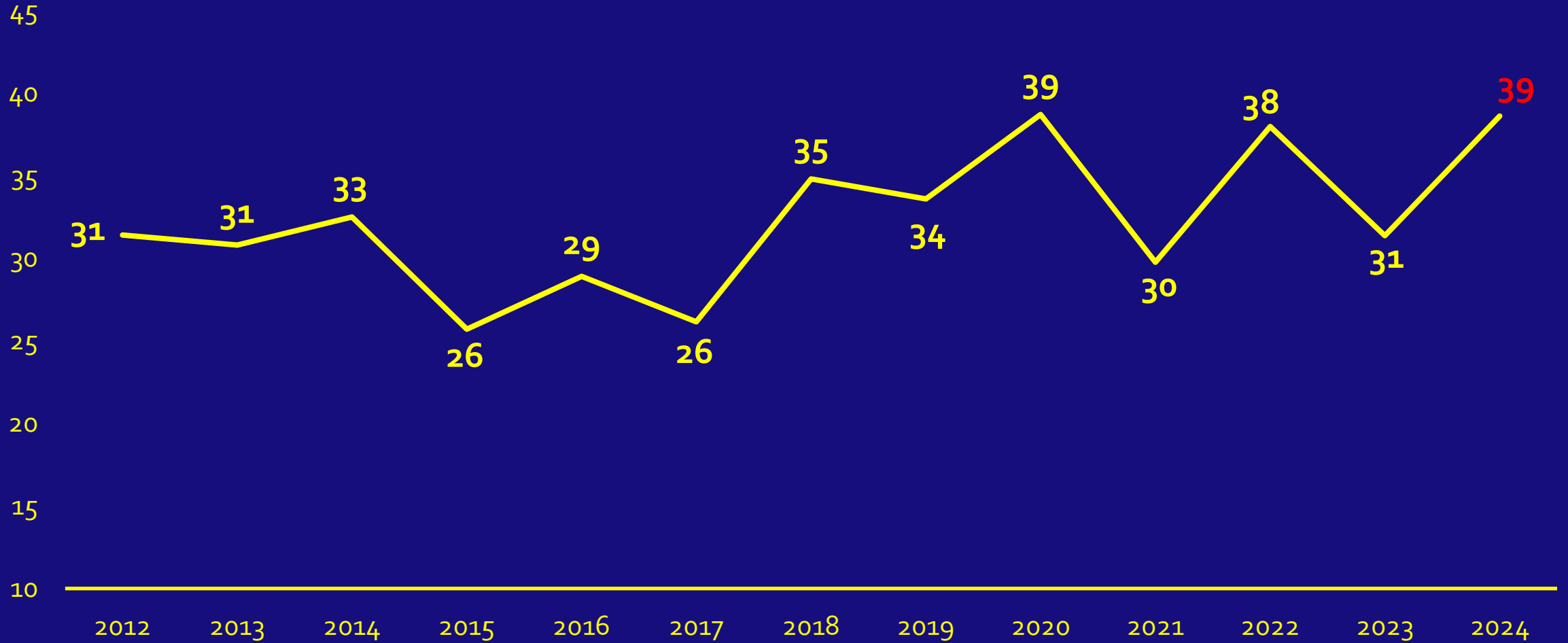


Cases that Went to Jury Trial in 2024

Torts/Personal Injury



Average Months to Civil Trial (Jury and Bench)



Time to Civil Trial by Judge in 2024

- Average time to civil trial in 2024 was 39 months
- 43 months to civil trial for senior district judges
- 39 months to trial for active district judges
- 33 months to trial for magistrate judges

Average Time to Trial by Case in 2024 (Bench and Jury)

Nature of Suit	Months to Trial	Number of Cases
Torts	38	12
Civil Rights/Employment	29	10
Insurance	34	5
Breach of Contract	77	4
Other Statutes	34	3
Prisoner Petition	43	2
Intellectual Property	42	1
Fair Labor Standards Act	31	1

How D. Colo. Compares?

- Speediest Resolution of Civil Trials (2024)

- E.D.Pa. 13.4 months
- E.D. Va. 14.2 months
- E.D. La. 16.4 months

- Slowest Duration of Civil Trials

- E.D. Cal. 67.5 months (5.5 years)
- N.D. Ill. 59.7 months
- W.D. N.Y. 59.7 months

How is E.D. VA. (Rocket Docket) so fast?

- **Rigid Discovery Rules**: The court has strict limits on discovery, reducing the time required for the initial discovery phase.
- **Hard Enforcement of Deadlines**: Judges enforce deadlines rigorously, ensuring that all parties adhere to the schedule.
- **Speed and Efficiency Culture**: A long-standing culture of speed and efficiency within the judiciary and the attorneys practicing in the Eastern District of Virginia.
- **Local Rules**: The court's local rules streamline the discovery process and deal with discovery disputes almost immediately.
- **Pretrial Order**: The court's pretrial order limits both parties to five non-expert witness depositions and 30 interrogatories each, with answers due within 30 days.
- *These elements work together to create a fast-paced and efficient legal environment, allowing cases to move from filing to trial within a short timeframe.*

Success Rate of Civil Jury Trials in 2024

- 18 verdicts in favor of plaintiff
- 12 verdicts in favor of defendant
- One case settled during trial
- One civil jury trial where judgment hasn't been issued
- Three pending motions for a new trial
- Fourth year in a row that plaintiffs have had a higher success rate than defendants – 60% of verdicts in favor of plaintiffs in 2024

Notable Awards in 2024

- The largest award granted in 2024 was \$56,575,000 in a product liability suit against Ford, but a motion for a new trial was granted in February 2025

Awards in 2024

Nature of Suit	Average Awards	Cases with Awards
Breach of Contract	\$7,719,204.00	1
Torts	\$6,463,231.98	6
Antitrust	\$6,149,090.00	1
Intellectual Property	\$4,330,045.00	1
Civil Rights	\$527,500.00	2
Other Statutes	\$500,000.00	1
Insurance	\$192,356.00	4
Prisoner Petition	\$17,500.00	1

*Torts average does not include the Ford liability suit

Attorney's Fees in 2024

- Six cases where attorney's fees were awarded – five jury trials, one bench trial
- Three were breach of contract, two were civil rights, one was antitrust
- Average attorney's fees: \$1,084,589.38
- Highest attorney's fees: \$8,293,73.56
 - The case was filed in 2019 by plaintiff AECOM Technical Services for breach of contract

Length of Civil Jury Trials in 2024

- 30 civil jury trials tried to verdict
- Average length: 6 days
- Most common length: 5 days
- Longest jury trial was 20 days in a breach of contract case filed in 2016, and a judgment has not yet been issued

Appeals of Civil Jury Trials in 2024

- 11 of 31 civil jury trials there was at least one appeal filed
- Represents a 35.48% appeal rate – up from 29.03% last year

Number and Success Rate of Civil Bench Trials in 2024

- Seven civil bench trials in 2024
- Three verdicts in favor of plaintiff, one for defendant, one split verdict, and two not yet decided
- Two plaintiff's verdicts where monetary awards were issued, other was an International Child Abduction Remedies Act (ICARA) case where verdict did not result in monetary awards
- One split verdict – plaintiff won \$1 in nominal damages in an equal opportunity suit filed by St. Mary Catholic Parish
- Largest verdict in civil bench trial was \$1,358,649 in a breach of contract suit with four defendants

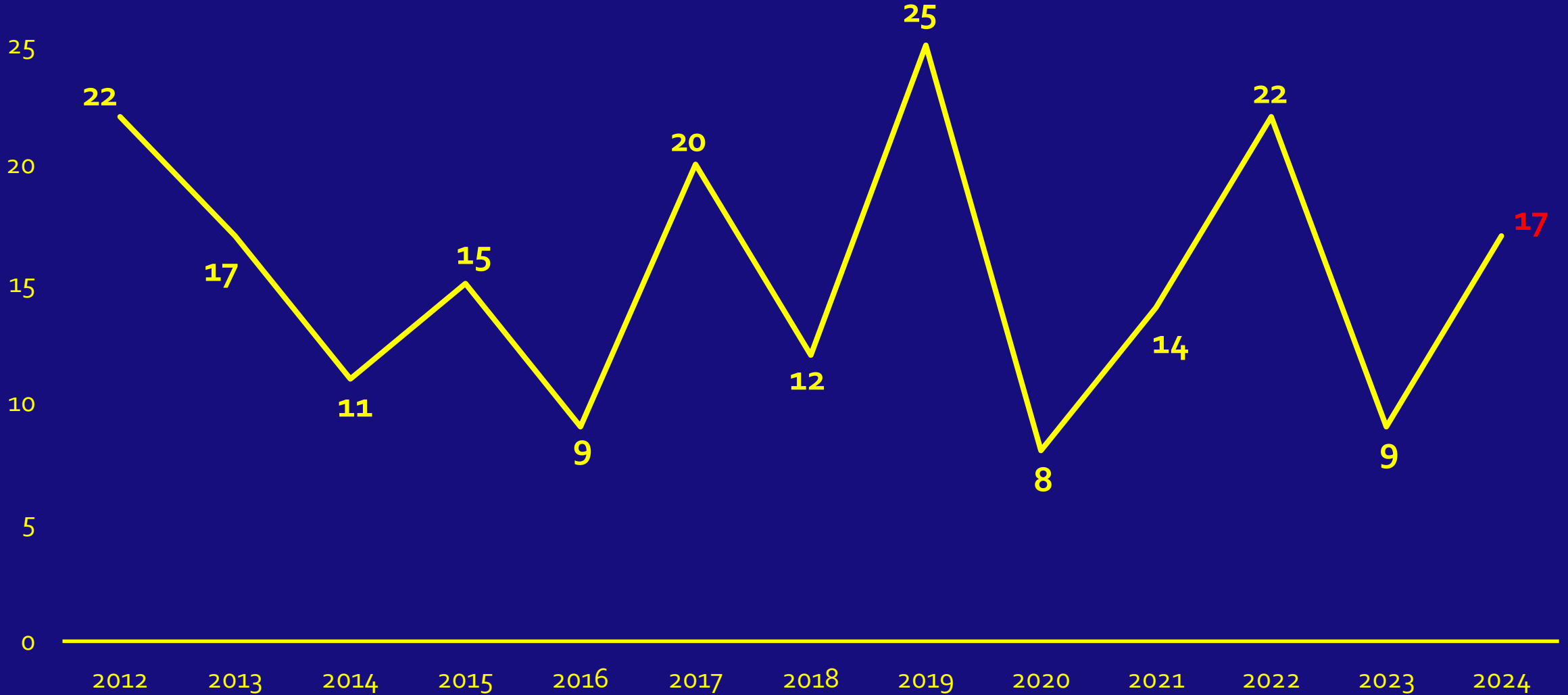
Time to Trial and Length of Civil Bench Trials in 2024

- Average time to trial: 38 months (approximately 3 years)
- Average length of civil bench trial: 3 days

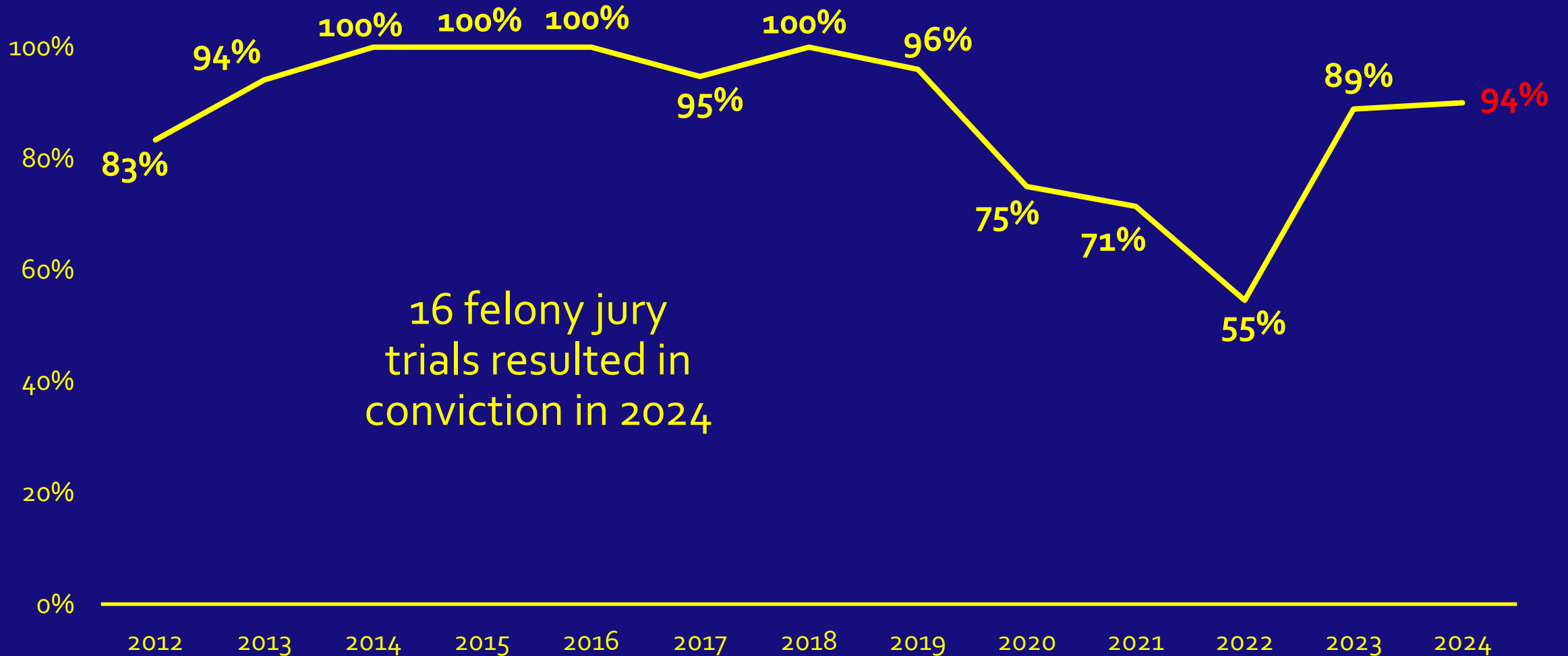
Criminal Trials Tried to Verdict in 2024

- 21 criminal trials – 17 felony jury trials, one misdemeanor jury trial, three bench trials
- Misdemeanor – defendant was acquitted on charges of disorderly conduct and resisting an officer

Felony Jury Trials



Felony Conviction Rate



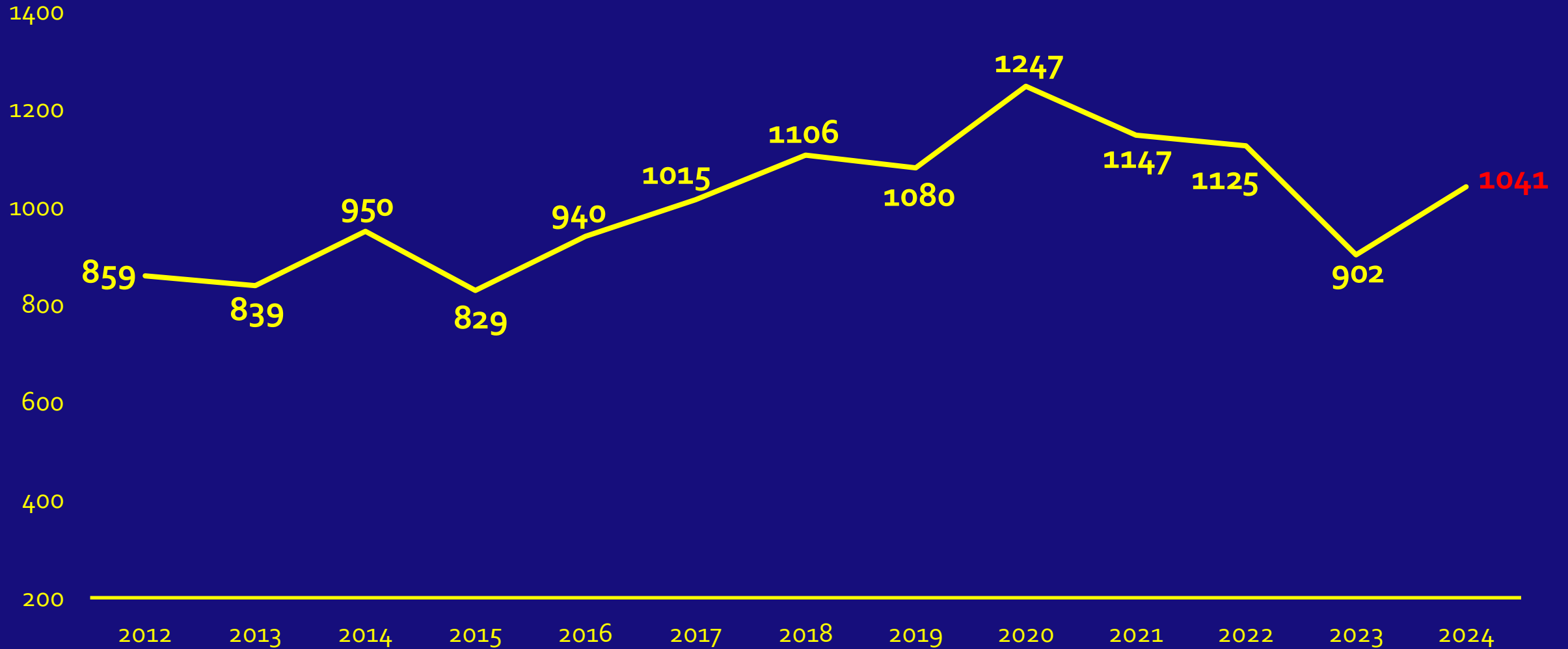
Time to Criminal Trial in 2024

- 21 criminal trials in 2024
- Average time from criminal complaint/indictment to trial: 17 months (approximately 1.5 years)
- Jury trial: 17 months
- Bench trial: 19 months
- Average jury trial was 6 days long

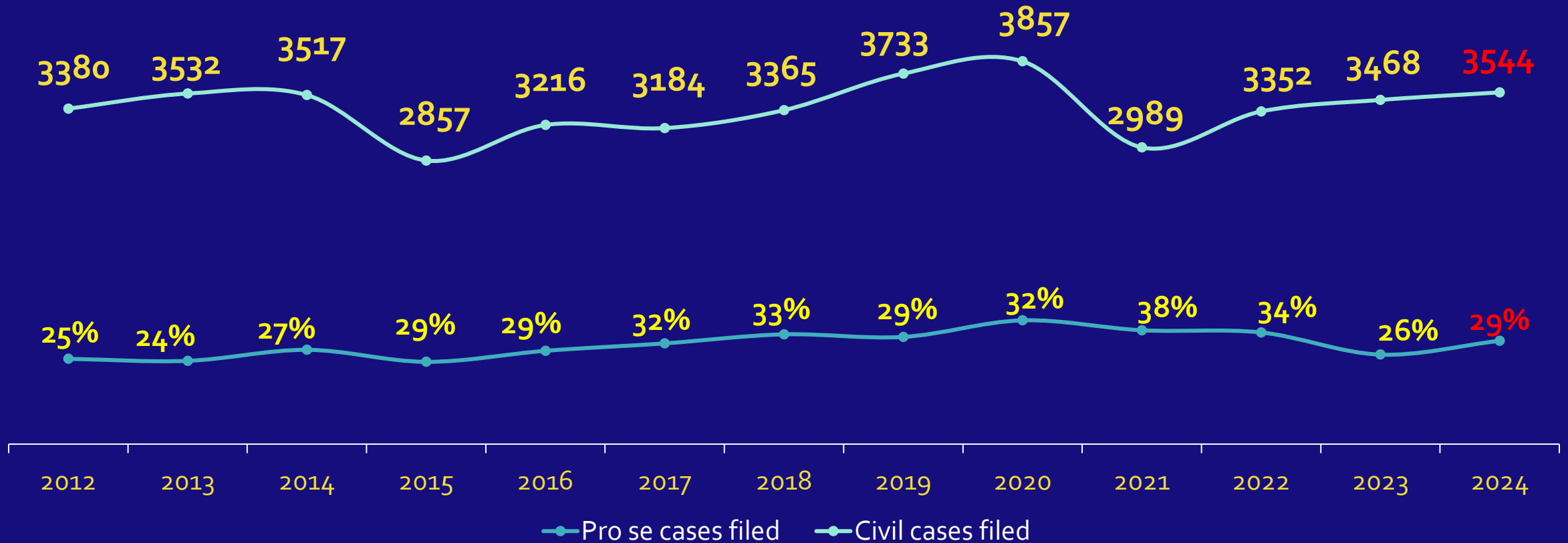
Criminal Bench Trials in 2024

- Three criminal bench trials in 2024
- One case involving threats in interstate commerce where defendant was found not guilty of all counts by reason of insanity
- The two other cases involved possession of firearms by a prohibited person and both resulted in convictions
- All three criminal bench trials were one day long

Pro se Cases Filed



Pro se Compared to Total Civil Filings



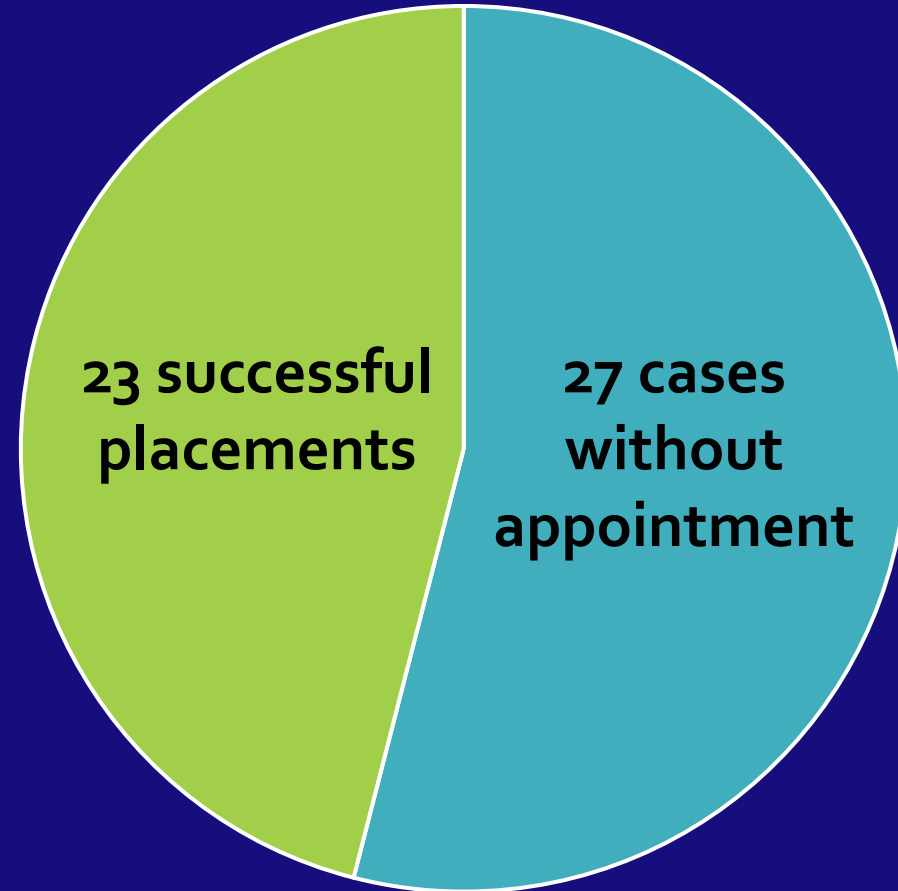
Pro Bono Appointments Ordered

There were 50 orders appointing Civil Pro Bono Panel in 2024

To date, 23 cases have been successfully placed

This represents a 46% placement rate

Notably, no Pro Bono cases went to trial in 2024



2024 Social Security Appeals

- 159 social security appeals filed in 2024 (the exact same number were filed in 2023)
- 36 cases without judgments to date
- Average time from filing to decision was approximately 5 months (159 days)

Motions to Dismiss and Orders Filed in 2024

- 1,152 motions to dismiss filed in 2024
- 854 orders issued on 2024 motions to date

Time to Decision from Filing on MTD

- 187 days from filing of the motion to dismiss to the order – approximately 6 months

Percentage of MTD Granted/Denied

- 315 motions to dismiss were granted in 2024 (37%)
- 285 motions were denied as moot (33%)
- 144 motions were denied (17%)
- 107 motions were granted in part (13%)
- Does not include motions to dismiss that were withdrawn, struck, stipulated/voluntary, or terminated when the case was administratively closed

Summary Judgment Motions and Orders Filed in 2024

- 464 motions for summary judgment filed in 2024
- 328 orders issued on 2024 motions to date
- 106 motions for partial summary judgment filed of 464 (23%)

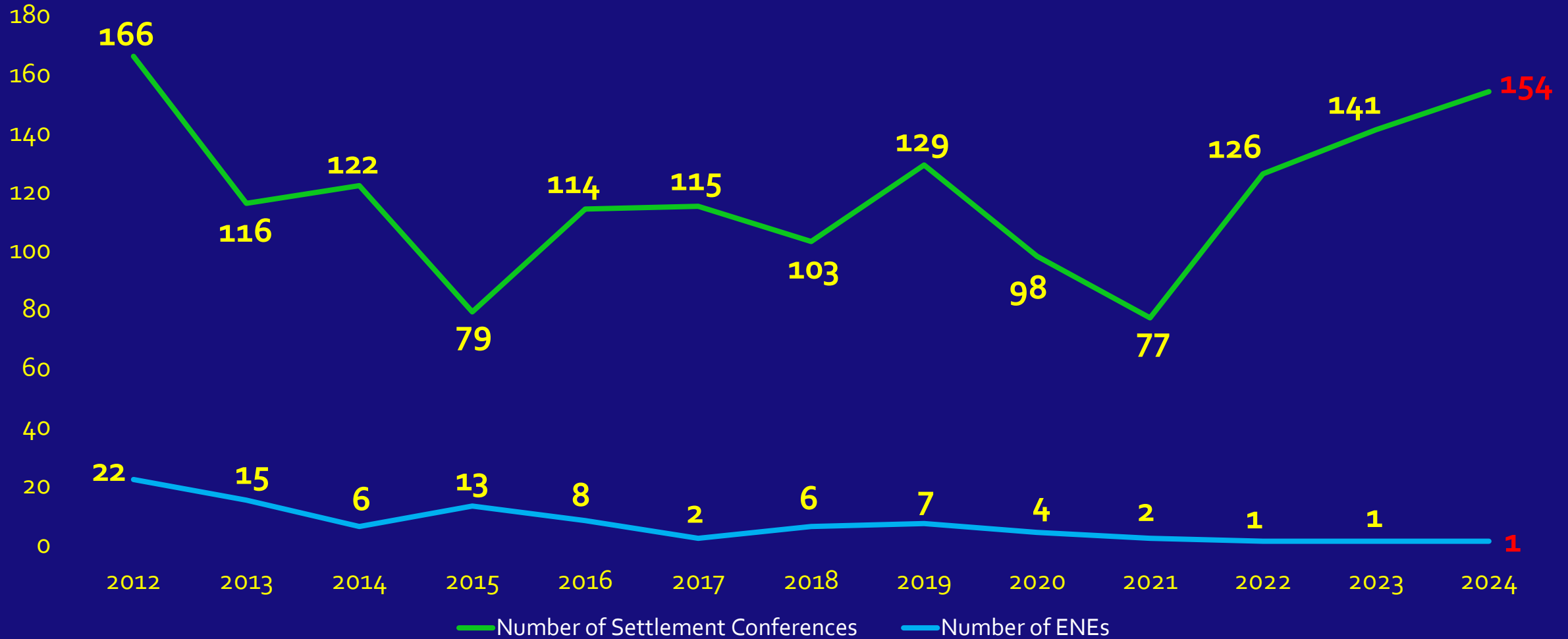
Average Time from Filing to Decision on Summary Judgment

- 183 days from filing of the motion for summary judgment to the order – approximately 6 months

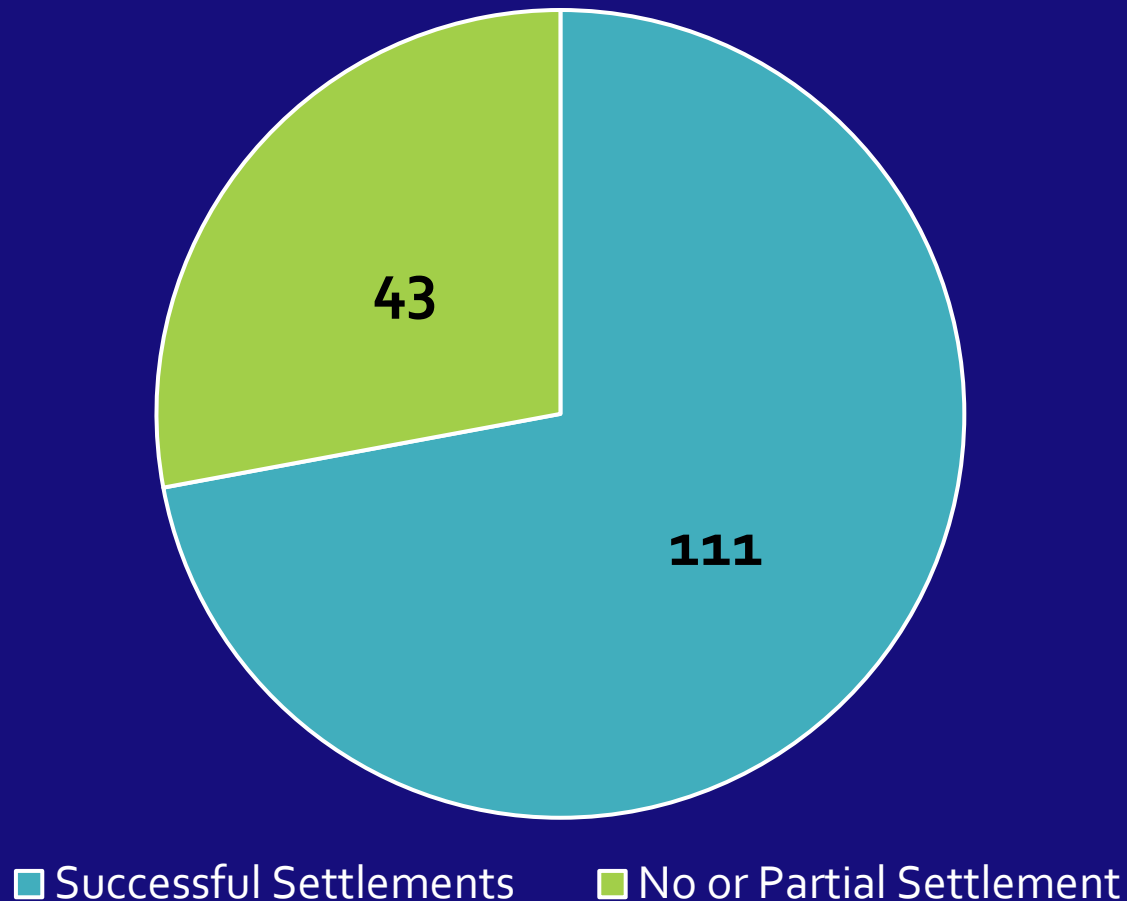
Percentage SJO Granted or Denied

- 115 motions were denied (35%)
- 98 motions were granted (30%)
- 59 motions were denied as moot (18%)
- 56 motions were granted in part (17%)
- Does not include motions for summary judgment that were withdrawn, struck, denied as premature, or terminated when the case was administratively closed

Alternative Dispute Resolutions



Settlement Conferences in 2024



"Success" does not include partial settlements

72% success rate in 2024

154 cases with settlement conferences, **194 total days** of settlement conferences

90 of those 194 days were held by Judge Hegarty

Settlement Conferences in 2025

92 Settlement Conferences through
September 2025

On pace for 123 for the whole year.

Reduction from 154 in 2024

A reduction in 20.1%

Number of Cases Appealed per Year to 10th Circuit

Source	Commenced									
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
10th Circuit	1956	2,338	1,856	1,830	1,757	1737	1599	1593	1742	1823
CO	457	459	413	495	446	436	447	407	424	463

Data taken from US Courts data, fiscal year Sept. 30 to Sept. 30.

Reversal Rate for D. Colo. In 10th Circuit

- Total cases decided in the 10th Circuit originating from D. Colo. from Jan-Dec 2024: **233**
- Total # of those cases criminal: **53**
- Total # of those cases civil: **180**
- Reversal rate (including cases that were only reversed in part): **36 of 233 =15.5%**
- Criminal reversal rate: **13%**
- Civil reversal rate: **16%**

Source: 10th Circuit Research and
Reference Librarian Baylee Suskin

Time to Decision from Filing of Notice of Appeal to Final Order

- 9 months between filing of notice of appeal to final order in 2024 in the 10th Circuit
- *data obtained from United States Courts Data and News

Third-least Busy Circuit

- 1,773 appeals filed in the 10th Circuit between March 2023 and March 2024 – third-least busy circuit for appeals filed behind DC and 1st Circuit
- Consistent trend – at least for last three years that has been the case
- *data obtained from United States Courts Data and News

Result—Judicial Conference

- On recommendation of the Committee, the Conference agreed to recommend to the President and the Senate not filling the next judgeship vacancy in the Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit, the Southern District of West Virginia, the Eastern District of Michigan, and the District of Wyoming, based on consistently low per-judgeship caseload.

Questions?