



# Criminal Procedure (Majority Verdicts) Act (Northern Ireland) 1971

## 1971 CHAPTER 37

An Act to enable juries in criminal proceedings to reach a verdict by a majority of their members. [16th December 1971]

### **1 Majority verdicts of juries in criminal proceedings.**

[<sup>F1</sup>(1) Subject to the following provisions of this section, the verdict of a jury in criminal proceedings need not be unanimous if—

- (a) in a case where there are not less than eleven jurors, ten of them agree on the verdict; and
- (b) in a case where there are ten jurors, nine of them agree on the verdict.

(1A) A verdict agreed upon as described in subsection (1) is in this section referred to as “a majority verdict”.]

- (2) A court shall not accept a majority verdict of guilty unless the foreman of the jury has stated in open court the number of jurors who respectively agreed to and dissented from the verdict.
- (3) A court shall not accept a majority verdict unless it appears to the court that the jury have had not less than two hours for deliberation or such longer period as the court thinks reasonable having regard to the nature and complexity of the case.
- (4) This section shall not extend to the trial of—
  - (a) any offence for which the court is required, upon the conviction of the accused, to sentence him to death;
  - (b) an offence upon which an accused person was arraigned before the commencement of this Act.

#### **Annotations:**

**F1** 1996 NI 6