THE LABOUR COURT
An Chúirt Oibreachais

Annual Report 2025

Presented to the Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment under Section 23(1) of the Industrial Relations Act 1946

THE LABOUR COURT
An Chúirt Oibreachais
1946 - 2026
ANNIVERSARY

First Recommendation Of The Labour Court

(1)

CÓRAS IOMPAIR ÁIREANN (DUBLIN ROAD FREIGHT DEPT.) TRADE DISPUTE

The Court has heard representatives of the employers and workers concerned in this dispute, and has also heard representatives of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union of which the workers are members and which readily gave its assistance to the Court in the investigation.

All three parties concerned in the case agree that a cessation of work, whether by strike or lock-out, before every reasonable opportunity has been availed of to settle differences by discussion and negotiation, is highly undesirable. The Court expresses its decided agreement with this view. Strikes undertaken without due notice or without proper consideration by, and authority from, the union concerned, and threats of summary dismissal or lock-out, inflict losses upon the employers, the public and the workers which ought to be avoided, and undermine the whole structure of collective bargaining on which good industrial relations depend.

From this point of view the Court is of opinion that there ought not to have been a stoppage of work in this case. But the Court's investigation has shown that, while the relations between the Company and the trade union are in general normal and friendly, nevertheless there have been circumstances affecting the road freight service which have given rise to misunderstandings and suspicions between the management and the workers, and that the introduction of the time-sheet to which the workers took exception was the occasion rather than the real cause of the stoppage of work. The investigation has enabled the Court to assist in clearing up these misconceptions and in laying a basis for the better understanding and close co-operation which is the best guarantee of discipline and efficiency.

The Court, therefore, recommends:-

(1) that the workers should continue to operate the experimental time-sheet system introduced by the Company, as they have done since they resumed work pending the investigation by the Court, and that, in view of the loss of pay the men have already incurred, the Company should not seek to impose any penalty on them;

(2) that not later than 31st December, 1946, the system should be reviewed by the Company in consultation with the men's trade union so that, if continued, it may be modified or improved as experience on both sides may suggest; and

(3) that if agreement is not reached as a result of this review the matter should be referred to the Court.

(Signed) R.J.P. MORTISHED

10 October, 1946.

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Chairman's Foreword

Mission Statement

"To provide high quality, fair and impartial arrangements for the resolution of industrial disputes and the determination of appeals in disputes based on employment law."

I am pleased to introduce the Labour Court's Annual Report for 2025 and present my first Chairman's Foreword. I took over the Chairmanship of the Labour Court in April 2025, inheriting the stewardship of an institution with a 79-year history of promoting harmonious relations between workers and their employers. Like my predecessors, I am committed to maintaining the Court's profile as a trustworthy and objective arbitrator between parties in dispute, whether in the delivery of recommendations in industrial relations, or in binding decisions under employment rights legislation.

The Court's focus is to support good employment relations in the economy through effective dispute resolution. An essential component of this is constructive engagement with employers, workers, trade unions, employer representatives and legal bodies. In that context, and as part of our outreach commitments, I have attended and participated in several seminars and conferences and met with representative bodies and organisations throughout the year. I would like to thank all those who attended and facilitated these meetings.

THE LABOUR COURT

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

As we look ahead, the court enters the coming year – our 80th anniversary –with a strong record of achievement, despite an increasingly complex caseload. This annual report, with its "retro" image, honouring the appearance of the early annual reports of the Court with a 'look-back' to the Court's first decision in October 1946 and other historical references throughout the Report. One of the first actions of the Court in 1946 was to issue a statement which stressed its independence- an essential cornerstone of the Court which remains as relevant today.

The Court's activities in 2025

The Court's statutory functions are delivered by the Members of the Court who are statutory office holders appointed by the Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment. We currently have three Divisions. A key priority during 2025 was maintaining service delivery , notwithstanding a number of key vacancies.

The Labour Court's core operations in 2025 continued with the work of processing appeals and referrals, from the Workplace Relations Commission; scheduling hearings of the Court and publishing the ensuing decisions and recommendations. There was an 11% decrease in the number of appeals/referrals to the Court. However, this reduction does not necessarily equate to a reduction in workload, due to increasing complexity and sitting days required to complete some appeals. Of the 992 appeals/referrals received 775 (78%) were appeals of employment rights decisions, and 217 (22%) were referrals under industrial relations legislation.

This pattern of referral, when closely scrutinized, highlights the far-reaching importance of effective industrial dispute resolution. Such referrals commonly involve disputes between

groups of workers and their employer, and although the employment rights cases are more numerous, industrial relations referrals usually have a wider impact, as the outcome can affect numerous workers across multiple sectors. In 2025 the Court dealt with industrial disputes covering a total of approximately 21,000 workers. This figure rises more than 90,000 when the Court's role in the making of Employment Regulation Orders is included. This highlights the crucial role that the 'court of last resort' plays in maintaining the industrial stability of the country.

Further details can be found in the industrial relations and employment rights sections in this Report.

The Court had a high volume of hearings - both regionally and in Dublin - with 1,018 scheduled. The number of hearings held in the Virtual Courtroom was 53, while 35 cases were heard using the Hybrid Courtroom facility, which allows parties or witnesses who could not attend a hearing in person to join it using technology. This technology has allowed hearings to take place which otherwise could have been delayed as witnesses would have been required to travel to Ireland for the hearing. 18 hearings involved the use of language interpreters.

Changes in Court Membership during 2025

- 2025 was a year which saw several departures from the Court, including that of my predecessor Kevin Foley after 9 years in the role.
- Employers' Member Sylvia Doyle also retired at the end of 2025, having been appointed in 2009.
- The Court welcomed a new Registrar, Maura McKenna, in July. Maura previously worked for the Workplace Relations Commission.
- The workload of the Court is subject to ongoing review. The Court is currently working with three Divisions.

In 2025 the Court dealt with industrial disputes covering a total of approximately **21,000** *workers.*

Acknowledgement

I would like to acknowledge the professionalism, commitment and expertise of my fellow Court Members, whose collective experience and judgement are fundamental to the quality of the Court's work. I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Registrar and the ongoing commitment of the administrative/support staff of the Labour Court to the Court's work during 2025. The priority for me and all staff has remained the delivery of excellent public service.

I wish to acknowledge the support provided to me and to the Court by the Head of Administration, Mr Robert Furlong, throughout the year. Mr Furlong served as the Court's Head of Administration until December 2025.

The support provided to the Court by the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment is fundamental to the delivery of the statutory functions of the Court. The Court's relations with the Department have remained unfailingly constructive. I would like to thank the Secretary General of the Department, Declan Hughes, for the provision of that essential support, and also to thank Yvonne White, Assistant Secretary General in the Workplace Regulation and Economic Migration (WREM) division and her team for their support throughout the year.

Louise O'Donnell
Chairman

Evelyn Owens Courtroom

In 2025, the Court honoured our former Chairman, the late Evelyn Owens.

The members and staff of the Court are proud of Evelyn's contribution to the State including through her roles in the trade union movement, as a senator in Seanad Éireann and as the first woman to hold the office of Chairman of the Labour Court.

In that latter role she led the Court with distinction and made an acknowledged contribution to the working lives of workers, employers and the working of the economy generally.

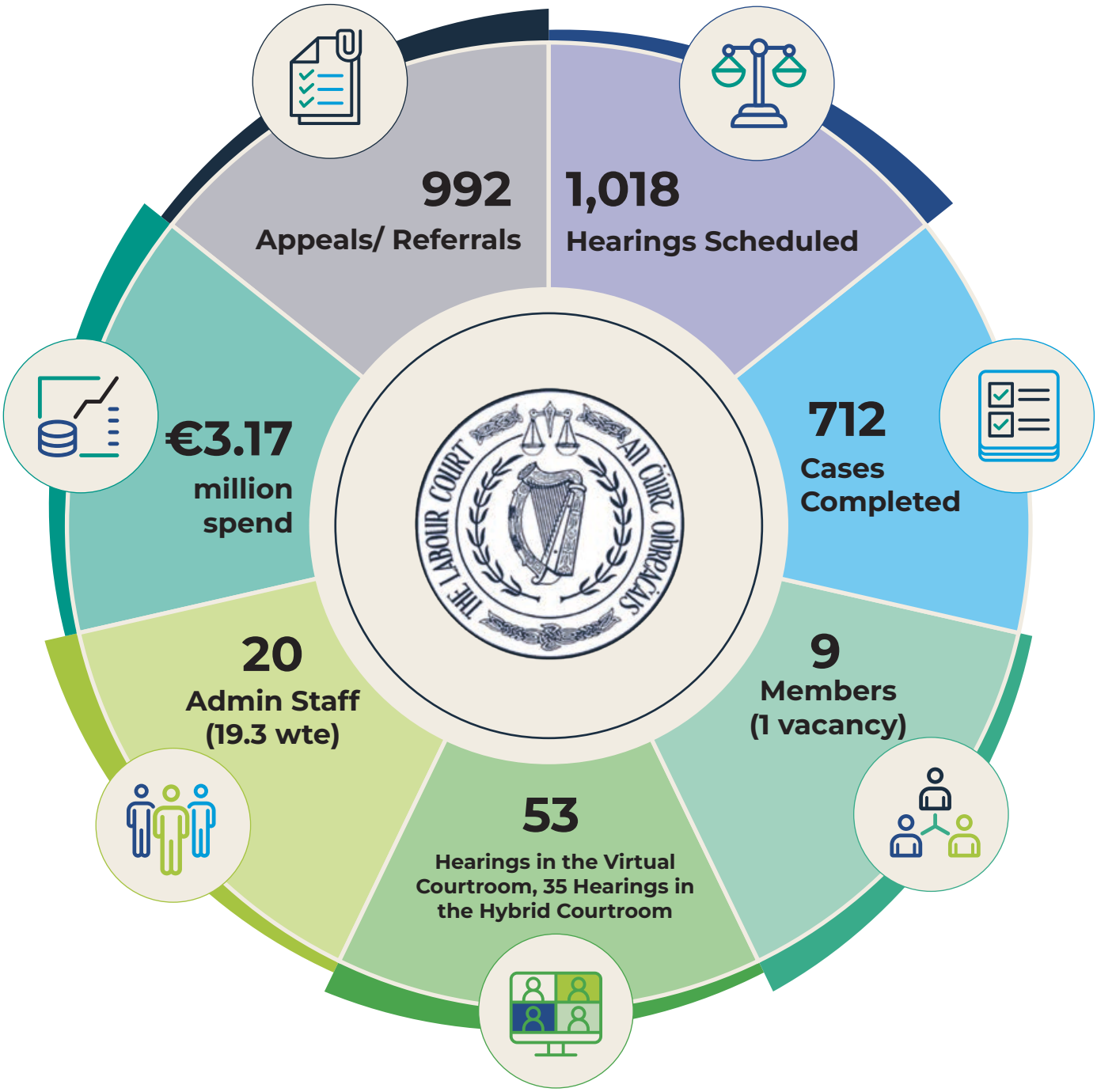
In honour therefore of the work and life of Evelyn, the main courtroom of the Labour Court in Lansdowne House was named *"Seomra na Cúirte Evelyn Owens"* with effect from 7th March 2025. The Court held an event for staff and invited guests in the courtroom to mark the event.

This was the first time that a courtroom of the Court in any premises had been named in honour of any person. We are proud that Evelyn's story will now include yet another first.

"Seomra na Cúirte Evelyn Owens" is now also home to a portrait of Evelyn, drawn by a former Labour Court colleague, Orla Collender, reproduced here.

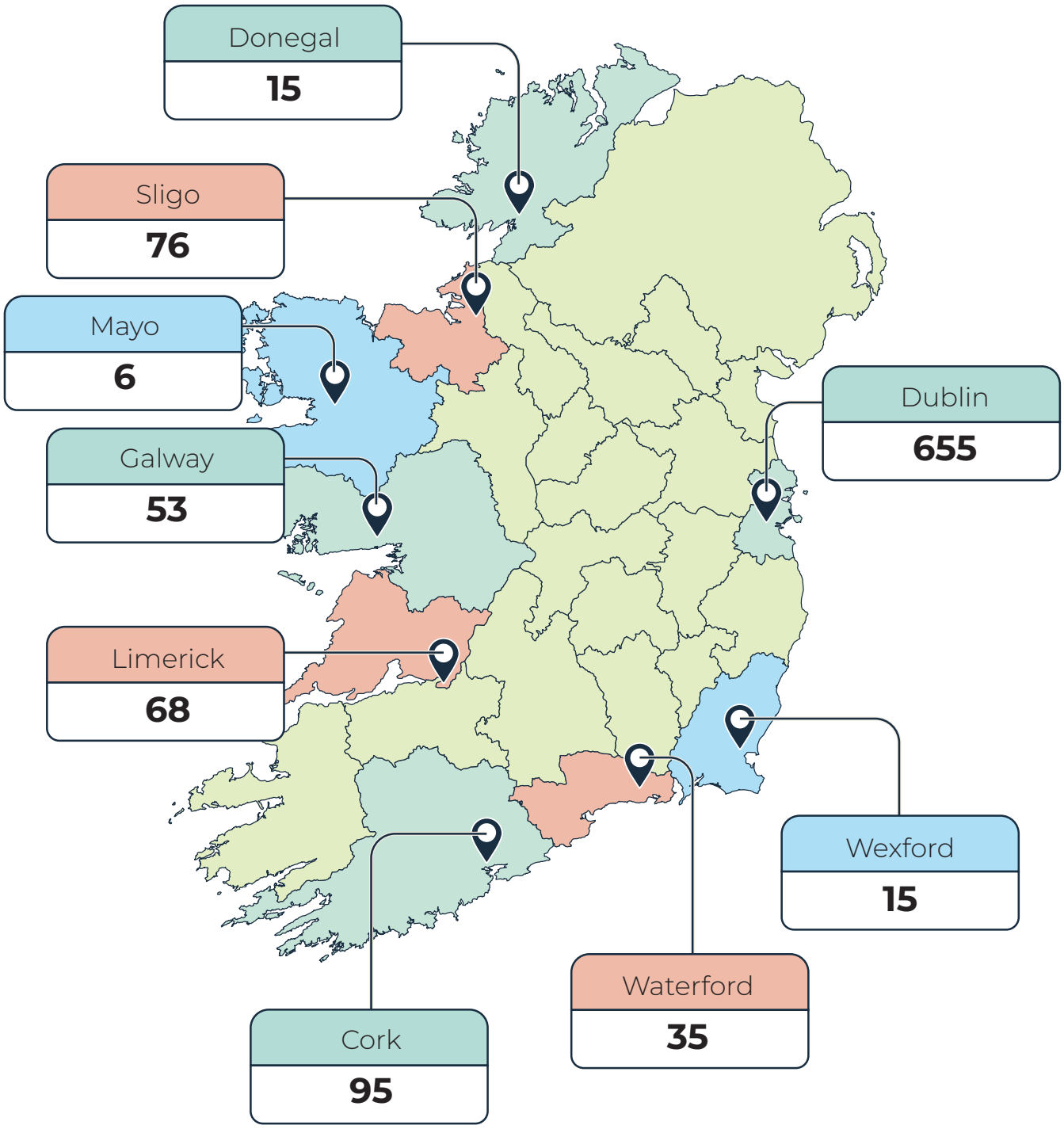
The Labour Court

The Labour Court in Numbers (2025)



The Labour Court Hearing Locations 2025

The map depicts the number of scheduled hearings in each location during the year



Functions of the Labour Court

The Labour Court is an independent workplace dispute resolution body providing a comprehensive service for the resolution of disputes concerning industrial relations and employments rights.

In industrial relations disputes it operates as a tribunal which hears both sides to a dispute and issues a written recommendation setting out its opinion on the merits of the dispute and how the particular dispute should be resolved. The parties to the dispute are expected to give serious consideration to the Court's recommendation.

In employment rights cases, the Court hears appeals of Adjudication Officers' decisions under all of the various employment law statutes. These cases concern the statutory entitlements of workers, therefore, the Labour Court issues written decisions which are legally binding and enforceable on the parties. Decisions can be referred by either party to the High Court, by way of an appeal on a point of law or by way of judicial review of the proceedings of the Court.

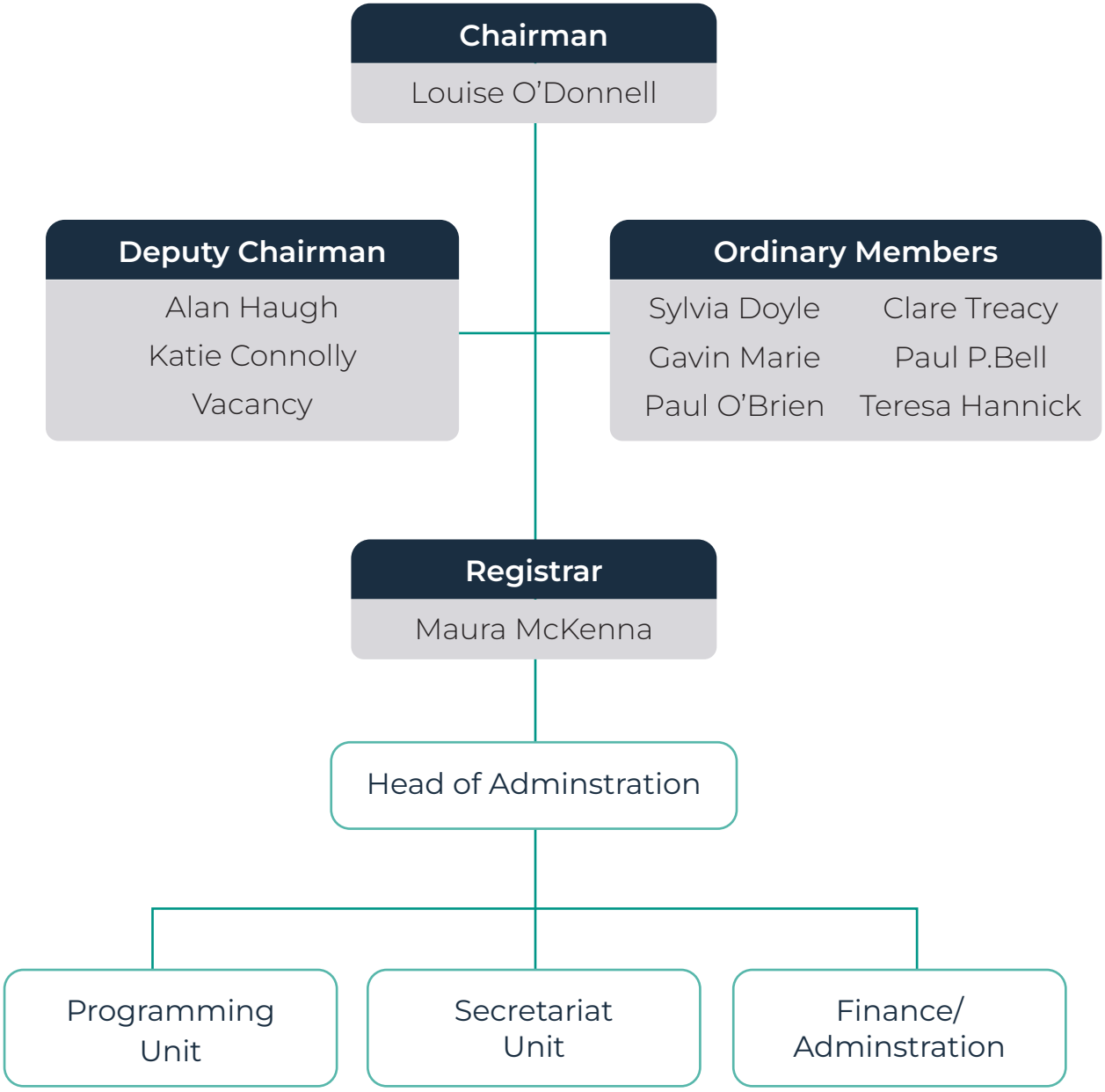
Referrals to the Labour Court

*Please refer to Appendices 2 & 3 for further details of referrals to the Court.

Structure of the Labour Court

In 2025 the Labour Court consisted of 10 full-time Members: A Chairman, three Deputy Chairmen and six Ordinary Members, three of whom are Employer Members and three of whom are Worker Members.

The Labour Court is supported in its function by a Registrar and administration service which is staffed by permanent employees who are civil servants and part of the staffing establishment of the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment.



Staff of the Labour Court

Photo of current Court Members

Standing: Left to right – Teresa Hannick, Niamh McGowan (joined April 2026), Gavin Marie, Maura McKenna (Registrar), Naledi Bisiwe (joined March 2026), Paul Bell. Seated: Left to right – Katie Connolly, Paul O'Brien, Louise O'Donnell, Alan Haugh, Clare Treacy.

Photo of the Administration Management

Left to right – Ruth Norton (joined January 2026), Maura McKenna, Roisin Collins, Ultan Dillon.

Photo of the Administration Team

Standing Back Row: Left to right – Adam Byrne, Ian Crawford, Brian O'Flaithearta, Aidan Ralph, Luke Brennan. Standing Middle Row: Damien Drennan, Sharon Byrne, Fiona Corcoran, Ultan Dillon, Amy Leonard, Maura McKenna. Seated Front Row: Roisin Collins, Therese Hickey, Ruth Norton, Julie Nicholl Flood, Ceola Cronin, Aine Maunsell.

Labour Court Outreach

The Labour Court, as the Ireland's single appellate body for workplace disputes, adjudicates in both interest-based industrial relations disputes (collective and individual) and individual rights-based employment law disputes.

The Court believe that building and developing information and knowledge amongst its user base about its services and how it goes about its statutory duties creates an accessible and usable Court for those who appear before it.

In addition to its social media activities, the Court devoted time and resources to attending and participating in seminars and conferences, meeting user groups and their representative bodies and associations, speaking with students and education institutions and facilitating mock labour court hearings.

The graphic below depicts the variety of organisation with which the Court had the pleasure of interacting through its outreach activities during 2025.

Service Reports

Review of Employment Rights in Ireland in 2025

Overview

The Labour Court ("the Court") had another busy year in 2025 and dealt with 775 employment rights appeals from the Workplace Relations Commission.

In 2025, Employment Rights legislation accounted for 78% of cases coming to the Court. The Court scheduled a total of 1018 hearings, 5% of which were scheduled in a virtual courtroom and 3.5% were hybrid hearings. The most common statutory appeals were Unfair Dismissals, Employment Equality, Payment of Wages, and Organisation of Working Time Act cases.

In 2025, Employment Rights legislation accounted for **78%** *of cases coming to the Court.*

Some of the significant appeals before the Court dealt with age discrimination, the consideration of reinstatement as a remedy and the application of the Karshan test in a case dealing with a tripartite relationship. A brief snapshot of some of these cases is set out below.

There were notable point of law appeals of Court decisions to the High Court in *Charpentier v Verizon Ireland Ltd* [2025] IEHC 628 (*Charpentier*) and *Debenhams Retail Ireland (In Liquidation) v Jane Crowe* [2025] IEHC141(*Debenhams*). The cases concerned specific aspects of the law relating respectively to European Works Councils (EWCs) and collective redundancies.

Whilst the High Court found the Court erred in its narrow interpretation of the law in Charpentier, this was the first Irish case examining the T*ransnational Information and Consultation of Employees Act 1996* (TICEA) and *EU Directive 2009/38/EC* on EWCs. [At time of writing leave has been granted to appeal to the Supreme Court]

In *Debenhams*, the High Court judgment provided clarification on the interpretation of consultation requirements in collective redundancy situations and notably commented on the appropriate approach to compensation for breaches of the *Protection of Employment Act 1977*.

In November 2025, the CJEU decision *Denmark v Parliament and Council,* Case C-19/23 on the Adequate Minimum Wages Directive confirmed the validity of most of the Directive. Article 5(2) and 5(3) of the Directive were found to constitute direct interference by EU law in the determination of wages and so were annulled. Importantly from an Irish perspective the judgement did not impact the promotion of collective bargaining, as required by the Directive.

Employment Rights Cases 2025

Irish Prison Service v Don Culliton, EDA256

The Court dismissed an appeal alleging age discrimination by the Irish Prison Service arising from pay disparity between the appellant and a director-level comparator.

The appellant's argument centred on a job advertisement particularly the requirement for "a minimum of 7 years managerial experience in a healthcare/health services or related field," he argued that this constituted an "age proxy" and thus direct discrimination.

Although both performed work of equal value, the Court found that the higher pay originated from the comparator's lawful appointment to a director role, where an alternative eligibility criterion of seven years' healthcare management experience was objectively justified due to recruitment challenges during decentralisation. The Court rejected the argument that this requirement was an "age proxy" and accepted the Respondent's bona fide reasons for the criteria and salary setting. The Court upheld the WRC decision that age was not a material factor in the remuneration difference. The Court also found that the advertisement was placed some ten years before the Complainant became an employee of the Respondent and some fifteen years before the commencement of the period comprehended by the within claim under the Act.

An Garda Siochana v Tom Ronan, EDA2560

The Court set aside a WRC decision which found that a civilian driver in the Garda Siochana was discriminated against on the grounds of age when he was forced to retire at age 70. The Court found that the complainant's forced retirement at 70 was not discriminatory but rather an implementation of state policy. The Court noted the Supreme Court in *Mallon v The Minister for Justice, Ireland and the Attorney General* [2024] IESC 20 has upheld the State's policy of a mandatory retirement age of 70 as being entirely consistent with the jurisprudence of the CJEU. [The case has been appealed to the High Court].

Department of Education v Piggott, TED255

A home tutor sought recognition that they had a contract of service with the Department of Education. The Court found that the arrangements in place were not consistent with a contract of employment between the Complainant and the Respondent. The Department merely acted as a payroll agent administering grants paid to parents who directly engaged tutors. Applying R*evenue Commissioners v Karshan (Midlands) Ltd T/A Domino's Pizza* [2023] IESC 24 the Court determined the Department did not exercise sufficient control over how the tutoring service was provided and there was no contractual obligation on the Department to pay the tutor under the grant scheme provided. The complainant had not personally agreed to execute work or services for the Department. The Court affirmed the Adjudication Officer's decision that the complaint was not well founded.

Contemporary Music Centre Clg v Linda O'Shea Farren, UDD2538

The Respondent conceded that the dismissal was unfair, at both the WRC and the Court. The appellant sought reinstatement. The Court found that reinstatement or reengagement were not an appropriate remedy in this case and the Court referring to *O'Siurd v. Bord Banistiochta* [2024] IESC 38 found compensation was the appropriate remedy. The Court was also satisfied that the total financial loss amount should be reduced by 30% to reflect the measures adopted by the Complainant to mitigate her loss and it varied the decision of the Adjudication Officer. [The case has been appealed to the High Court]

Review of Industrial Relations in Ireland in 2025

Overview

The Labour Court had another busy year in 2025 dealing with industrial disputes covering in and around 21,000 workers. We also processed three Employment Regulation Orders - Contract Cleaning sector covering 20,000 workers, Security sector covering 16,000 and the Early Learning sector covering 35,000. Thirty percent of the industrial relations referrals to the Court in 2025 involved joint referrals of a collective bargaining nature by Workers and Employers. These covered a number of issues including pay agreements, re-organisation, and shift cycles. The Court also engaged with a number of parties whose issues were resolved prior to the issuing of a Labour Court Recommendation

30%

of the industrial relations referrals to the Court in 2025 involved joint referrals of a collective bargaining nature by Workers and Employers.

The following represents a snapshot of the disputes that the Court dealt with in 2025:

CD/25/121 Bus Eireann and five Trade Unions

This was a claim in respect of a number of issues including a pay rise, increase in night work allowance and an increase in higher substance payments. The Labour Court recommendation, which provided for pay increases of 6.75% over the two calendar years 2025 and 2026 as well as higher subsistence payments and an increased night work allowance, was accepted by a 62% margin in an aggregate ballot of all five unions.

CD/25/97 Kyte Powertech and SIPTU

Labour Court recommendation CD/25/97 on pay at the Cavan-based automotive parts manufacturer was backed by over 400 SIPTU workers involved by an 81% margin.

The Court recommended a two-year pay deal for 7.75%, in two phases of 4.5% from January 1, 2025, and 3.25% from January 1, 2026, with a small increase in voucher payments.

Other elements of an earlier proposal from the Workplace Relations Commission remained under the Court's proposals, including an ongoing 'benchmarking desktop exercise' being undertaken by an agreed independent assessor, under which a significant number of workers potentially stood to benefit.

CD/25/123 National Ambulance Services (NAS) and SIPTU /UNITE

Prior to the Court hearing, substantial agreement on the modernisation programme had been agreed in talks between SIPTU/UNITE and management, facilitated by the Workplace Relations Commission. But final sign off was stalled due to a last-minute hitch over whether a new pay scale for paramedics would be phased – as management sought – or implemented in one go, as the unions had assumed. The Employer also opposed the Workers' claim for retrospection.

The Labour Court recommended that the pay scales that had been agreed at the WRC be introduced from August 1, 2025 – and not on a phased basis, as had been proposed by the employer side. The Court did not recommend in favour of the unions' claim for retrospection.

The Labour Court recommendation was rejected by a ballot of the Workers and the issues remain unresolved.

Bord Na Mona and SIPTU CD/24/331

The matter before the Court involved a pay claim by SIPTU on behalf of drivers, helpers and general operatives. The claim also sought improvements in respect of pension, sick pay and holidays. The last pay agreement between the parties expired on 31 March 2024. A pay agreement was being sought for a three-year period to expire 31 March 2027. The Court held hearings on 16 January 2025 and 24 February 2025. The parties were invited to make an additional submission in advance of the hearing on 24 February 2025.

The Court, having considered the written submissions received, the oral submissions made at the hearings, as well as the outcome of a benchmarking exercise that had been commissioned by the parties recommended as follows:

No further increase on the payments already made in 2024, which ranged from 3.5% to 6.00%. From 1 April 2025 3% pay increase for all grades except helpers who will receive a 6% increase and from 1 April 2026 All grades to receives a 3.25 % pay increase. The agreement is due to expire on 31st March 2027.

The Court went on to state that the parties should engage locally on a bonus scheme and explore changes to the scheme that would generate payments to staff. This recommendation was accepted by the Workers.

Industrial Relations – Committees, Orders and Agreements

Joint Labour Committees

The Industrial Relations Acts 1946–2015 provide for Joint Labour Committees (JLCs), which set statutory minimum pay rates and employment conditions in specific sectors through Employment Regulation Orders (EROs).

A JLC consists of employer and worker representatives, appointed by the Court, and an independent chairperson appointed by the Minister. When a JLC drafts ERO proposals, it must publish them and invite public submissions. After considering any submissions, the JLC may amend and adopt the proposals. These are then sent to the Court along with a report from the chairperson and all supporting documentation. If the Court approves the proposals, they are forwarded to the Minister. Once satisfied that all statutory requirements have been met, the Minister makes an ERO giving the proposals legal effect.

The following JLCs were in existence in 2025.

1. Agricultural Workers
2. Catering
3. Contract Cleaning
4. Hairdressing
5. Hotels
6. Retail, Grocery and Allied Trades
7. Security Industry
8. English Language Schools Sector
9. Early Years' Service

The most recent review under Section 41A of the Industrial Relations Act 1946 ('the Act') was completed on 12th April 2023 recommended that all JLCs which were the subject of the Review be maintained in their current form. For further details refer to www.labourcourt.ie.

The following is the JLC/ERO activity in 2025:

- A new Employment Regulation Order (ERO), which amends the 2024 ERO for the Security Industry, came into effect on 22 July 2025 (SI No. 326 of 2025). This sets the statutory minimum rates of pay and other conditions for persons employed in the security industry sector.
- The Employment Regulation Order (Contract Cleaning Industry Joint Labour Committee) 2025 (ERO) came into effect on 17 October 2025 (SI No. 430 of 2025). This order revokes the 2024 order. This ERO fixes the statutory minimum rates of pay and other conditions of employment for workers employed in the contract cleaning industry.
- New Employment Regulation Orders (ERO) for the Early learning and Childcare sector came into effect on 13th October (S.I.'s No. 477 & 478 of 2025) and amends the 2024 Order for various workers in the Early Years Services Sector. This provides for minimum hourly rates of pay and other conditions of employment in the sector.

Joint Industrial Councils

A *"qualified Joint Industrial Council"* (JIC) is a voluntary negotiating body for an industry or part of an industry and is representative of employers and workers. If it fulfils conditions set out in the industrial relations legislation, it may apply to the Labour Court for registration and the Court, if satisfied, will place it on the Register of Joint Industrial Councils.

The Labour Court facilitates the JICs by making available an officer of the Court to act as secretary at their meetings. Details of those JICs registered with the Court as of 31 December 2025 are included in Appendix 4.

Registered Employment Agreements (REAs)

The Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2015 establishes a statutory mechanism for the registration of employment agreements between employers and trade unions governing terms and conditions of employment at enterprise level. The Act defines an employment agreement as an agreement between one or more employers (or a trade union of employers) and one or more trade unions relating to workers' remuneration or conditions of employment, binding only on the parties to the agreement and the specified class, type, or group of workers. Where the Labour Court is satisfied that the statutory requirements are met, it may register the agreement, rendering its provisions legally enforceable in respect of all workers to whom it applies.

During 2025, an application was made for the variation of the Registered Employment Agreement (Veterinary Ireland) by the Minister for Agriculture with the agreement of Veterinary Ireland in July 2025. A recommendation to vary the order was sent to the Minister in September 2025 and signed into law in January 2026.

An application was received in October 2025 from Connect Trade Union in relation to the variation of the Registered Employment Agreement for the Overhead Powerline Industry.

Sectoral Employment Orders

Sectoral Employment Orders (SEOs) made under the Workplace Relations Act 2015 provide a legislative framework which allows the making of Statutory Orders providing for minimum rates of pay, sick leave and pension to apply to workers of a class, type or group (including apprentices) in a specified economic sector. An SEO must also contain a dispute resolution procedure and so acts to promote industrial harmony and minimise industrial unrest.

Upon receipt of a request, the Labour Court can initiate an examination of the pay, pension and sick pay entitlements of workers in a particular sector and, if it deems it appropriate, make a recommendation to the Minister on the matter.

If the Minister is satisfied that the Court has complied with the provisions of the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act, 2015, he/she shall make the Order. Where such an Order is made it will be binding across the sector to which it relates.

During 2025, having received a request from a trade union of workers, the Labour Court gave notice of its intention to conduct an examination into Terms and Conditions in the Commercial Archaeology sector pursuant to Section 15 of the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2015.

Commercial Archaeology Sector - The Labour Court

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1946 - 2026
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The first sitting of the Labour Court, 23rd of September 1946

Left to right (seated) – Francis Vaughan Buckley (Deputy Chairman), Thomas Johnson (Workers Member), Cathal O'Shannon (Workers' Member), R.J.P. Mortishead (Chairman), Peter McLoughlin (Employers' Member) and William M. Bruce (Employers' Member)

The Labour Court in 2026

Standing: Left to right – Teresa Hannick, Niamh McGowan (joined April 2026), Gavin Marie, Maura McKenna (Registrar), Naledi Bisiwe (joined March 2026), Paul Bell. Seated: Left to right – Katie Connolly, Paul O'Brien, Louise O'Donnell, Alan Haugh, Clare Treacy.

Statement of the Court at its Inaugural Meeting

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APPENDIX I.

STATEMENT BY THE COURT AT INAUGURAL MEETING HELD ON 23rd SEPTEMBER, 1946.

The Industrial Relations Act of 1946 is brought into operation to-day and the Labour Court functions from this date.

The Act is described by its long title as "an Act to make further and better provision for promoting harmonious relations between workers and their employers and for this purpose to establish machinery for regulating rates of remuneration and conditions of employment and for the prevention and settlement of trade disputes, and to provide for certain other matters connected with the matters aforesaid."

The Court has thought it proper that at this first public sitting the Chairman, on behalf of the Court, should make statement of the spirit in which the Court approaches its task and of the general principles by which it hopes always to be inspired.

The functions of the Court are determined by the statute under which it is set up and we can neither diminish nor extend them. They are functions of great importance to the general welfare. We are all conscious of the responsibility—the very heavy responsibility—that is laid upon us. But we feel that the responsibility will not be unduly onerous, because it does not rest on us alone but on all those who, whether in their participation in the actual work of the Court or in discharge of their duties outside, are concerned with the conduct of industrial relations.

By the passage of the Industrial Relations Act the Oireachtas effected a very noteworthy change. It has transferred from a Government Department to a specially constituted Court the responsibility for securing a reasonable adjustment and settlement of differences between employers and workers by negotiation, discussion and agreement between the parties. Two essential facts should be stressed. This Court is an independent body, independent of the Government and of every other body. Further, it is so constituted that representatives of employers and workers take part on a basis of equality in all its work. The Act may be regarded as an expression of industrial or vocational self-government. It is based on the principle that whenever possible employers and workers should reach a right and reasonable settlement of their differences by discussion and negotiation, directly between their organisations or through machinery they have set up by mutual agreement in the form of a joint industrial council or otherwise, and to meet the case where there is no other machinery that can be used for this purpose or where the machinery that does exist has failed to be fully effective, the Act

establishes this Court. When agreement between the two sides is reached, the Act enables it to be made fully effective through the registration of the agreement with the Court. But the Act does not empower the Court or any other body to impose a settlement; it leaves either side free to press its case to the extreme if it feels that the issues involved are important enough to warrant it in doing so. The inspiration of all proceedings under the Act is co-operation and the Court is confident that it will receive from all parties the loyal co-operation it will itself endeavour to give to them.

The Court is not an ordinary Court of Law. But it is a Court —a Court of reasonableness and fair dealing and of as high a degree of social justice as circumstances permit us to attain. Our proceedings must, therefore, be conducted with due dignity and decorum, but also in the atmosphere of friendliness and goodwill that should prevail among those engaged in collaboration on a common task. We shall expect the spokesmen of both sides to defend the rights and further the interests of those they represent with all the earnestness of genuine conviction. We shall expect them also to bear in mind, along with their responsibility to their constituents, their responsibility to the country of which we are all citizens. We shall look for, and we shall value, accuracy and lucidity in the exposition of facts and cogency and persuasiveness in argument; we shall not be impressed by mere rhetoric or cleverness in debate. What we shall value most will be plain commonsense and a sense of proportion. Our aim will be always to find a basis for real and substantial agreement.

Our task will not be easy. Success in it will not be achieved by the efforts of the Court alone. Sometimes it may not be achieved at all. But we trust that fair and reasonable agreement will be the objective of all of us at all times.

It will probably be convenient to give a brief description of the general nature of the Act under which we are working.

Agreements between employers and workers governing wages and conditions of work may be registered with the Court subject to the fulfilment of certain conditions and in particular to the condition that they make provision for settlement of disputes by negotiation before resort to a strike or lock-out. When registered, such agreements become binding on the employers in the particular trade concerned and for the particular area named. Provision is made for the cancellation of such registered agreements on request.

Provision is also made for the establishment of Joint Labour Committees for such trades as the Court may think fit. These Joint Labour Committees will be on practically the same lines as the old Trade Boards.

Existing Joint Industrial Councils will continue to function and such Councils may be registered with the Court provided that provision is made in the constitution of the Council that there is to be no stoppage of work without reference to the Council. New Joint Industrial Councils may, of course, also be set up.

The Court is given power to intervene when differences arise between employers and workers which might lead to open disputes. It may make recommendations to avoid any stoppage of work or, if a stoppage has taken place, to secure a resumption of work on satisfactory terms. It may also, without itself investigating a dispute, appoint a conciliator to act as mediator.

Finally, Part VII of the Act makes certain important transitional arrangements. Under this Part any trade union of workers or body representative of such workers may, on its own initiative, record with the Court a Wages (Standard Rate) Order and any Bonus Orders, relating to such Wages Order, which have been issued by the Minister for Industry and Commerce, under the Provisions of the Emergency Powers (No. 166) Order, 1942, or the Emergency Powers (No. 260) Order, 1943. Applications for recording may be sent by registered post. The Court, however, cannot record any Order unless it is submitted prior to the expiration of four months from to-day. It is, therefore, necessary that all trade unions or bodies which wish to take advantage of this Part of the Act should do so within this statutory period.

The effect of recording will be to impose on an employer covered by the Order a legal obligation to pay to his workers wages not less than the rates specified in the Wages Order, together with the bonus specified in the Bonus Order.

Where no Wages (Standard Rate) Order applies to workers, a trade union or body representative of workers may apply to the Court for an Order fixing rates of remuneration for such workers. Having given notice of an application and heard all parties concerned, the Court may make a wages order fixing rates of remuneration. If the applicant body does not reject the Order within sixteen days, it will come into operation and have the same effect as if it were a recorded Wages (Standard Rate) Order and Bonus Order.

When an Order has been recorded, a trade union of workers or body representative of workers may apply to the Court for an increase in the rates of wages specified in the Order. The Court, having heard all parties, may either make an Order providing for such higher rates of wages as it thinks fit or decline to make any Order. If it does make an Order the trade unions or bodies representing workers specified in the Order of the Court must then decide whether or not they will accept the

Order of the Court and they must notify the Court within sixteen days. If no objection is received within this period it will be deemed that the Order is accepted.

When an Order is accepted it will replace the Wages Order and will be binding on all parties, i.e., the employers concerned will be legally bound to pay the higher rates.

Rules of Court are being prepared and will be published as soon as possible.

The Labour Court in Quotes

"I will now turn to the details of the Bill. I wish to say first, however, that I do not regard this Bill as a Government measure in the ordinary sense. It is a measure designed to facilitate trade unions of workers and employers in adjusting their difficulties concerning wages and conditions of employment and I can say that, within very wide limits, it will be framed as they want it framed, subject to the willingness of the Dáil as a whole to accept what is proposed. I regard myself merely as the instrument for bringing the Bill before the Dáil, steering it through its various stages and bringing it into operation when enacted. I do not wish to force on anybody my personal views regarding its provisions. I have invited the organisations that are representative of trade unions to submit their observations on it, to suggest any changes which they think will improve it and generally to regard it as their Bill."

Minister for Industry and Commerce, Sean Lemass, 25th June 1946, reading the Industrial Relations Bill 1946, Dáil Éireann second stage

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"If this were a court of law, one would be inclined to construe the Act as requiring a definition or description of the cases in which counsel should be allowed to appear; but the tribunal is a board of laymen and it is engaged upon an experiment of the highest public importance; and if, in such a matter as representation by counsel, it considers that it must feel its way by practical experience, in the novel field which it is exploring, I think this judicial tribunal would be wrong if it applied a curial standard to the board, alien to its peculiar constitution and purpose; a statute governing the rules of a body of this kind is most aptly interpreted in a broad and liberal spirit. If, as I am entitled to assume, the Labour Court believed, when it made the rules, that the best it could do was to entrust the allowance of counsel to the particular tribunals, I do not think the High Court of Justice, when construing the Act, can fairly say that the Labour Court was wrong, by reading in to the section a judicial standard for a non-judicial tribunal"

McElroy & Ors v Mortished & Ors, Judgment of Gavan Duffy P. High Court of Justice, 17th June 1949

"In the field of industrial relations, the State's concern is to provide machinery so that disputes can be resolved before developing into great tests of strength. This implies that the employer and worker would do their level best to find a solution before turning for outside help and that, if they invoke outside help in the form of the procedures and machinery provided by the State, they would use it for the genuine purpose of reaching a peaceful solution."

Minister for Labour, Dr. Patrick Hillery, 14th May 1969, reading the Industrial Relations Bill 1969, Seanad Éireann

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"It is a tribute to the Labour Court that it has so successfully adapted itself to varying circumstances in its thirty-eight year history, going through cyclical patterns of economic recession and growth and major structural changes in the Irish economy and in the collective bargaining system. The Court has maintained its independence and impartiality as it has worked through decentralised wage rounds, National Wage Agreements and Understandings. I am confident that in the more recent return to a decentralised bargaining system the Court will continue to retain the confidence and trust of the trade unions, employer organisations and their membership. The Court properly belongs to them; it was established in their interests and will continue to make positive and lasting improvements to industrial relations."

Speech by Ruairi Quinn, Minister for Labour, at the opening of the Labour Court building, Haddington Road, 1st May 1984

"In its first fifty years, the Labour Court has issued as many as 19,000 recommendations and other decisions directly involving perhaps 1.7 million people and indirectly involving many more. During that time, it has shown its flexibility and that it can adapt to the changing demands on its resources. These demands are constantly changing due to developments in various areas: economic and social, legal and political, and many more. Looking back at its work over the past fifty years, I think it is true to say that the Labour Court has achieved a great deal in the development of the dispute settlement process in industrial relations in Ireland and the establishment of a body of case law in equality issues. Will it continue to do so over the next fifty years? I think that it will."

Evelyn Owens, Chairman of the Labour Court, 21st Countess Markievicz Memorial Lecture, 18th November 1996

"A remarkable indigenous success story"

President Mary Robinson, at an event to mark the 50th anniversary of the Labour Court, 23rd September 1996

"Any assessment of this issue must begin with an acknowledgement of the fact that the Labour Court has performed a most valuable public service since its inception. Its duties have evolved from being largely those of a mediator and conciliator, to that of a body charged with determining sometimes very complex matters of fact and law."

MacMenamin J. (Supreme Court), Náisiúnta Leictreach Contraitheoir Eireann Cuideachta Faoi Theorainn Ráthaíochta (NECI) v The Labour Court & Ors [2021] IESC 36

"We have seen time and again the huge impact the Labour Court has had in resolving disputes in this country, and we recognise the economic importance of their role in maintaining industrial peace for workers and employers alike."

Peter Burke TD, Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, commenting publicly on the Court's work (April 2025)

Labour Court Internal Services

Financial Management

The Labour Court is funded by the Exchequer, through the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment. Expenditure totalling €3.17m was incurred by the Court during 2025. This comprised €2.7m in respect of pay and €0.46m in respect of non-pay. All Labour Court finances are administered through the Department's budget and form part of the Department's accounts. As well as arranging its own tenders for the provision of goods and services, the Court also avails of drawdown of services from the Department in areas such as learning and development. Expenditure is monitored constantly and is reviewed on a monthly basis.

Expenditure totalling

€3.17m

was incurred by the Court during 2025.

For details see Appendix 5: Financial Report for 2025.

Customer Service

The Labour Court operates under a Customer Service Charter and Action Plan 2025-2027. The Charter sets out the level of service that users can expect to receive if availing of the Court's services. The Customer Action Plan describes how the commitments and standards set out in the Customer Charter will be delivered in accordance with the guiding principles of Quality Customer Service that have been adopted across the public service. The Charter can be viewed at www.labourcourt.ie

Official Languages Acts, 2003 and 2021

During 2025, the Labour Court continued to ensure that our statutory obligations and commitments to the provision of services in the Irish language were met in accordance with the Official Languages Acts, 2003 and 2021. A member of Senior Management was appointed to oversee performance and report on the Labour Court's obligations under the Acts.

The following actions were taken by the Labour Court during the year 2025 to ensure compliance with the Act:

- The publication of statutory documents in the Irish Language including the Labour Court Strategic Plan 2025-2027 and the 2024 Annual Report.
- Meeting our obligations under section 10A. (1) (a) & (b) (Advertising by Public Bodies)
- Staff attendance at Irish Language training

Better Regulation

The Labour Court is committed to providing an efficient and accessible forum for settling matters of dispute between employers and workers in the State. To this end, practices within the Court have been adapted to facilitate digital and remote access to its users. The full introduction of an online portal in early 2024 allows appeals and referrals to be submitted directly for the Court's consideration, and technology to allow remote attendance at hearings where appropriate has been introduced to the Labour Court's headquarters. Virtual hearings, introduced during the Covid 19 pandemic, are still in use where this suits the circumstances of the disputing parties. These practical enhancements to the delivery of the Court's mandate align with wider commitments in the public service to the principles of Better Regulation, minimising where possible the administrative burden on Court users.

Climate Action and Sustainability Statement

In accordance with the Public Sector Climate Action Mandate, the Labour Court reports annually on its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, implementation of the Mandate and wider sustainability activities. In 2025, the Court reduced overall energy-related emissions to approximately 13.5 tCO_2, representing a reduction of over 50% from baseline levels, with electricity emissions now 73% below baseline, as reported through SEAI's Monitoring and Reporting system. The Court continues to implement the Mandate through energy efficiency measures, digitisation, waste reduction initiatives and staff engagement via a reconstituted Green Team. Compliance with Circular 1/2020 on offsetting emissions associated with official air travel is maintained, with any identified liabilities offset in line with Departmental procedures. Looking ahead to 2030, the Labour Court will continue to work in collaboration with the Workplace Relations Commission, OPW and SEAI to further reduce emissions, improve energy efficiency and embed sustainability across its operations, as outlined in the Climate Action Roadmap

In 2024, the Court reduced overall energy-related emissions to approximately

13.5 tCO_2,

representing a reduction of over 50% from baseline levels, with electricity emissions now 73% below baseline, as reported through SEAI's Monitoring and Reporting system.

Memorandum of Understanding

In 2025 the Labour Court prepared a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with its parent Department, the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment.

The Court undertook to provide an agreed level of service in accordance with the deliverables and performance criteria specified in the agreed annual work programme as set out in Appendix 6 and in accordance with all relevant legislation.

Public Sector Human Rights and Equality Duty

Under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014, the Labour Court continues to uphold its statutory duty to promote equality, prevent discrimination, and protect the human rights of all those who use its services and work within the organisation. The Court remains committed to embedding these principles across its decision making, service delivery and internal operations, ensuring that its processes are fair, accessible and respectful for all.

The Labour Court undertook assessment of the human rights and equality issues most relevant to the Court, focusing on access to justice, participation in hearings, procedural fairness, inclusive communication, and the experience of staff in the workplace. This assessment highlighted the importance of ensuring that all users—regardless of disability, language proficiency, literacy level, or other protected characteristics—can fully engage with the Court's processes. Particular emphasis was placed on fair and balanced procedures, safeguarding privacy, and ensuring transparency and consistency in all dealings before the Court. The assessment also recognised key rights for staff, including dignity at work, equality of opportunity, and supportive accommodations where needed.

The Labour Court has made significant progress in strengthening its Public Sector Duty commitments. Administrative staff completed Disability Awareness Training. This programme enhanced knowledge of visible and non visible disabilities, promoted an understanding of respectful and inclusive language, and provided practical tools for identifying and removing barriers faced by Court users. Staff also completed specialised Communication Techniques training, with a particular focus on recognising vulnerability, adapting communication styles, and supporting individuals who may experience additional challenges in navigating quasi judicial processes. These initiatives have resulted in increased staff confidence and capability in providing sensitive, patient and effective assistance across all points of engagement—whether in writing, by phone, online or in person.

The Labour Court's Access Officer continued to coordinate reasonable accommodations and supports for service users, including the provision of interpreters — such as Irish Sign Language (ISL) interpreters — upon request, with no cost to the parties. The Court also continued its work on inclusive communication, maintaining its commitment to plain English materials and actively reviewing user facing documents to ensure clarity, accessibility and consistency.

The Labour Court further strengthened its commitment to dignity, respect and equality through an updated Customer Charter. The revised Charter clearly articulates the Court's service standards, user rights and expectations, its commitment to impartiality and fair procedures, and the range of supports available to those engaging with the Court. This update reflects the Court's ongoing focus on ensuring that its values—fairness, respect, accessibility and integrity—are embedded across its operations.

These developments reflect the Labour Court's strong commitment to embedding human rights and equality considerations into every aspect of its functions. Through continuous assessment, training, improved communication and enhanced user supports, the Court is working to ensure that its services are accessible, fair and inclusive for all, in line with its statutory Public Sector Duty and its broader mission to promote harmonious workplace relations and access to justice.

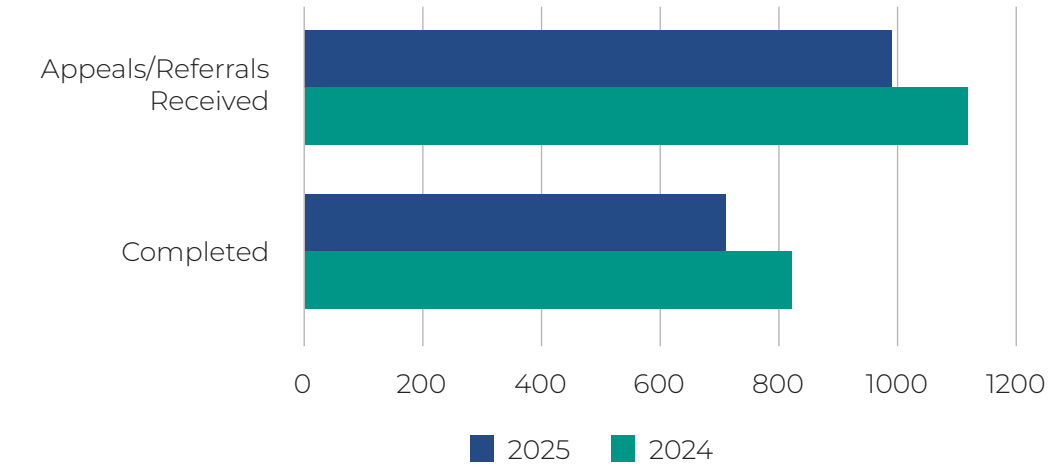
Appendices

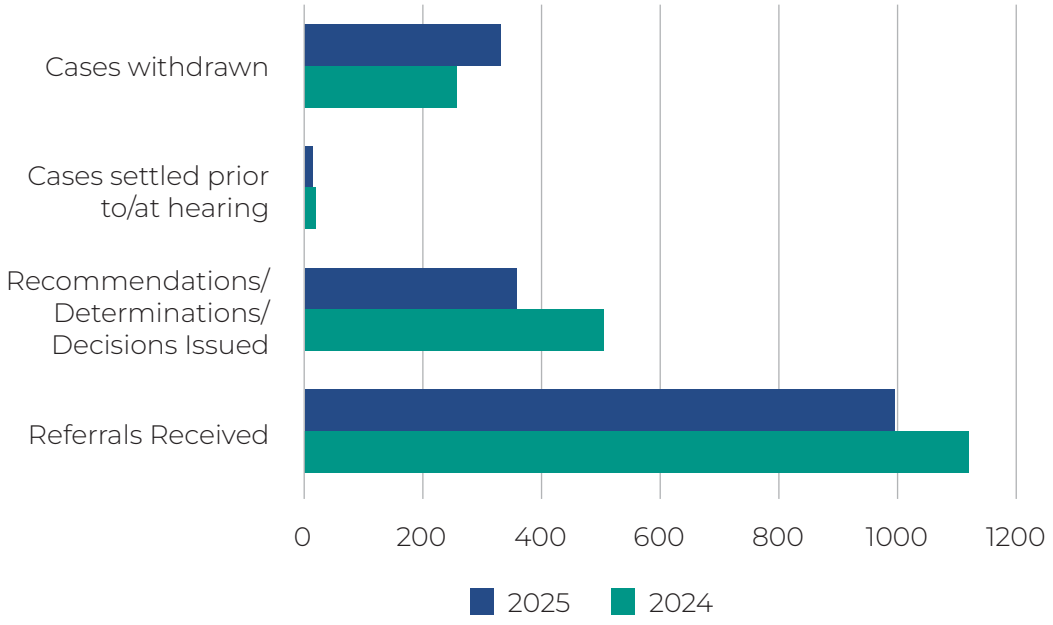
Appendix 1: Overview Annual Report 2025 Statistics

During 2025, the Labour Court:

- Received 992 appeals/referrals;
- 1018 hearings were scheduled;
- 359 postponements were granted;
- 712 cases were completed; and
- 432 appeals / referrals were ready to be programmed at the end of 2025.

Fig 1: Headline activities





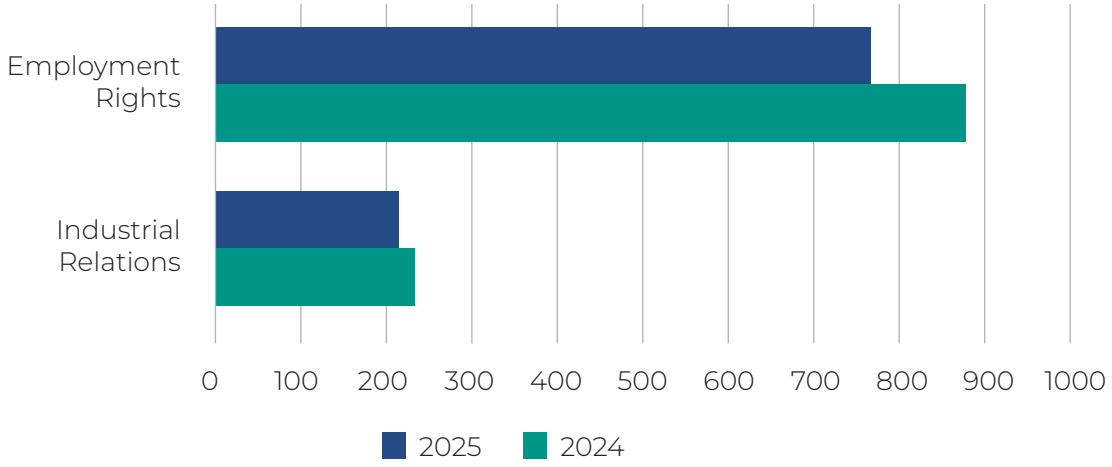
Appeals to the Court

Overall, the number of referrals/appeals to the Labour Court in 2025 shows a fall of 11% from to the previous year (from 1119 to 992).

Referrals and Appeals under the Industrial Relations Acts 1946 to 2015 accounted for 22% of total referrals / appeals. Industrial relations referrals decreased by 7% compared to the numbers of such referrals received in 2024 (234 dropped to 217).

Appeals under employment rights legislation accounted for 78% of cases coming to the Court, in overall numbers a decrease of 14% on the previous year, from 885 to 775.

Fig 2: Industrial relations and employment rights appeals to the Court



See Appendices 2 and 3 for a detailed breakdown of these headline appeal figures.

Hearings scheduled

The Court scheduled a total of 1018 hearings in 2025, of which 5% were scheduled in a Virtual Courtroom. A total of 359 postponements were granted during 2025. A total of 270 cases were withdrawn with 81 of those withdrawals relating to cases which had been scheduled for hearing. Such withdrawals, particularly when occurring shortly before the scheduled date and time of hearing, impacted significantly on the capacity of the Court to effectively manage its resources in terms of allocation of Court room hearing time.

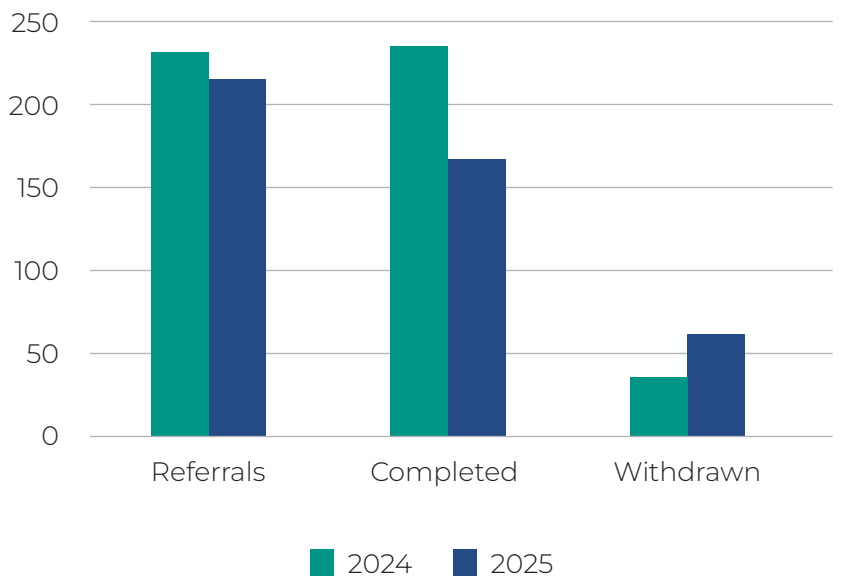
35 hearings were held in a hybrid Courtroom, which allowed some participants to attend the hearings using remote access.

Industrial Relations Cases

The number of cases received under the Industrial Relations Acts 1946-2015 received was 217. The number of cases completed (i.e. in respect of which a recommendation, determination, or decision issued, or the matter was settled by the referral party, in 2025 was 107 (170 including withdrawn cases).

Industrial relations recommendations made by the Court can be view on the Court's website www.labourcourt.ie.

Fig 3: Industrial relations cases activity

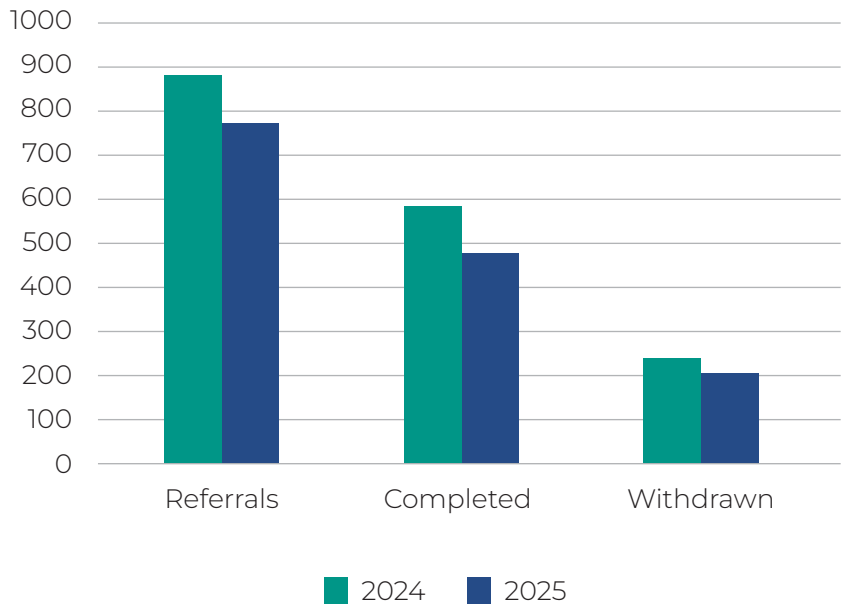


Employment Rights Cases

The number of employment rights appeals received by the Court in 2025 was 775. The number of cases completed (i.e. in respect of which a recommendation, determination, or decision issued or the matter was settled before or at a hearing) was 477, of which 208 cases were withdrawn at or prior to hearing or scheduling.

Decisions made by the Court can be viewed on the Court's website www.labourcourt.ie.

Fig 4: Employment rights appeals activity



Information on the profile of employment rights appeals received in 2025 is at Appendix 3.

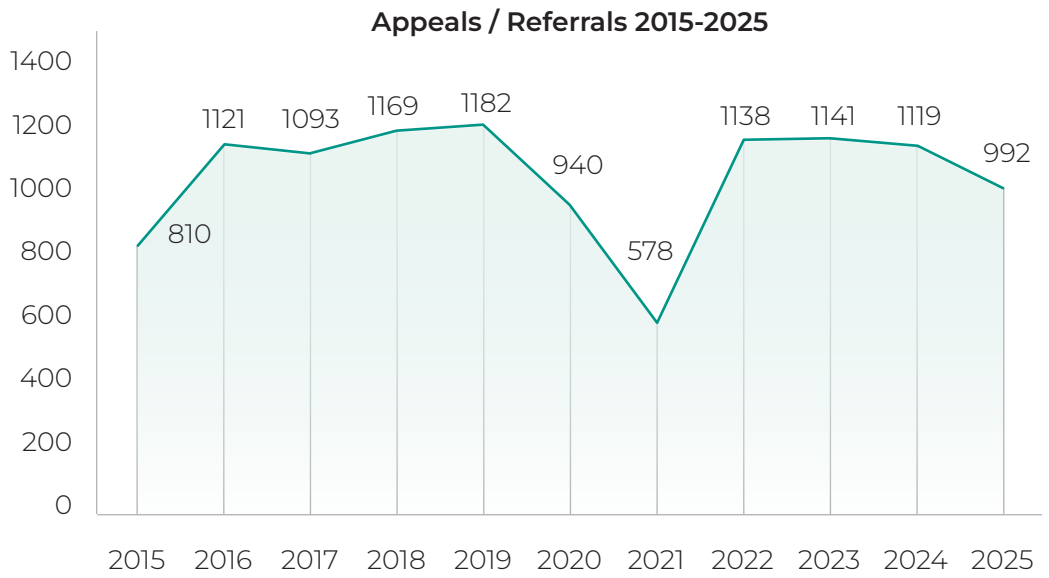
It is one of the functions of the Labour Court to determine appeals of Adjudication Officer decisions under the full range of employment protection legislation currently in effect.

See Appendix 3 for detailed case activity statistics.

Ten-year trend 2015-2025

Appeals/referrals to the Labour Court in 2025 numbered 992, an 11% drop on the previous year. The five year trend clearly demonstrates the impact in 2020/2021 of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Fig 5: Number of referrals of employment and industrial disputes 2015 – 2025



Appendix 2: Industrial Relations

Table 2.1 Profile of industrial relations cases received.

		2024	2025
Appeal of Adjudication Officer Decision	Section 13(9), Industrial Relations Act, 1969	107	92
	Section 10, Industrial Relations (Misc Prov) Act, 2004	0	1
	Section 45(B), Industrial Relations Act,1946	4	1
Direct Referral	Section 20(1), Industrial Relations Act, 1969	57	51
	Section 20(2), Industrial Relations Act, 1969	0	2
	Section 2(1), Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act, 2001	0	0
	Section 26(5) Industrial Relations Act, 1990	5	0
	Section 12(1), Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2015	0	0
	Section 23(3), Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2015	1	4
	Section 42B(4), of the Industrial Relations Act, 1946	0	0
Conciliation Service	Section 26(1), Industrial Relations Act, 1990	60	66
Total		**234**	**217**

Table 2.2: Industrial relations cases activity 2025 by category.

	Worker	Company	Withdrawn	Settled	Clarification issued/ no jurisdiction	Recommendations/ Decisions	Upheld	Overturned	Varied	Outside Time Limit	Direct Referral
Section 23(3), Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act, 2015	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Section 10, Industrial Relations (Misc Prov) Act, 2004	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Section 13(9), Industrial Relations Act, 1969	65	27	24	2	1	41	13	10	16	2	0
Section 20(1), Industrial Relations Act, 1969	51	0	25	1	2	19	0	0	0	0	19
Section 20(2), Industrial Relations Act, 1969	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Section 26(1), Industrial Relations Act, 1990	66	0	13	1	0	39	0	0	0	0	39
Section 26(5), Industrial Relations Act, 1990	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Section 45(B) Industrial Relations Act, 1946	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Section 42B(4), Industrial Relations Act, 1946	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	187	30	62	5	3	100	13	10	16	2	59
	Total received 217		Total completed 170				Total decisions 100				

Appendix 3: Employment Rights Statistics

Table 3.1: Profile of employment rights appeals received.

Section /Act /Application	2024	2025	% change from 2024 (+/-)
Unfair Dismissal	**135**	**147**	**+9**
Section 8A Unfair Dismissals Acts, 1977	135	147	
Equality	**159**	**151**	**-5**
Section 83, Employment Equality Act, 1998	159	147	
Section 77(12), Employment Equality Act, 1998	0	4	
Payment of Wages	**159**	**113**	**-29**
Section 7, Payment of Wages Act, 1991	159	113	
Organisation of Working Time	**123**	**90**	**-27**
Section 28, Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997	123	90	
Terms of Employment	**104**	**84**	**-19**
Section 8, Terms of Employment (Information) Act, 1994-2018	104	84	
Minimum Notice & Terms of Employment	**31**	**25**	**-19**
Section 12A Minimum Notice & Terms of Employment Acts, 1973	31	25	
Redundancy Payments	**38**	**20**	**-47**
Section 39A Redundancy Payments Act 1967	38	20	
Protection of Employees on Transfer of Undertakings	**21**	**25**	**+19**
Section 11(1) EC (Protection of Employees on Transfer of Undertakings) Regulations, 2003	21	25	
Protected Disclosures	**28**	**27**	**-4**
Section 12(2), Protected Disclosures Act, 2014	28	27	
Safety, Health & Welfare at Work	**17**	**28**	**+64**

Section /Act /Application	2024	2025	% change from 2024 (+/-)
Section 29, Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005	17	28	
Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work)	28	14	-50
Section 15, Protection of Employees (Fixed-Term Work) Act, 2003	4	11	
Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work) Act, 2003	24	3	
National Minimum Wage	8	6	-25
Section 27(1), National Minimum Wage Act, 2000 and 2015	8	6	
Protection of Employees (Part-Time Work)	5	4	-20%
Section 17 Protection of Employees (Part-time Work) Act, 2001	5	4	
Parental Leave	7	6	-14
Section 19 (1), Parental Leave Acts, 1998 and 2006	7	6	
All other appeals received by the Court	22	35	+59%
Section 27 of the Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 2023	0	4	
Section 20 (1), Carer's Leave Act, 2001	0	1	
Schedule III Competition Act 2002-2010	1	0	
Section 33(1), Maternity Protection Act, 1994	1	2	
Section 24 of the Parent's Leave and Benefit Act 2019	3	0	
Section 20 (2), Criminal Justice Act 2011	1	1	
Section 25 (2,) Protection of Employees (Temporary Agency Work) Act, 2012	4	2	
Protection of Employees (Employers' Insolvency) Acts, 1984 to 2012	0	1	
Section 9(1), European Communities (Working Conditions of Mobile Workers engaged in Interoperable Cross-Border Services in the Railway Sector) Regulations 2009	0	1	

Section /Act /Application	2024	2025	% change from 2024 (+/-)
Regulation 19, European Communities (Road Transport) (Organisation of Working Time of Persons Performing Mobile Road Transport Activities) Regulations, 2012	2	3	
Section 35 Further Education and Training Act 2013	1	0	
Section 19, Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act, 1996	0	2	
Protection of Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998	0	2	
Section 6(2), Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act 2010	1	0	
Section 81E of the Pensions Act, 1990 as amended by the Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004	1	7	
Section 11, Sick Leave Act, 2022	2	8	
Protection of Employment Act, 1977	3	1	
Schedule 2 of the Employment Permits Act, 2006	2	0	
Totals	**885**	**775**	**-12%**

Appendix 4: Registered Joint Industrial Councils

The following particulars of associations on the Register of Joint Industrial Councils during the period covered by this Report are given in accordance with the requirements of section 23(3) Industrial Relations Act, 1946.

		Date of Registration
1.	Joint Board of Conciliation and Arbitration for the Boot and Shoe Industry of Ireland	10 July 1948
2.	Joint Industrial Council for the Dublin Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Trade	27 January 1964
3.	Joint Industrial Council for the Construction Industry	26 July 1965
4.	Joint Industrial Council for the Security Industry	12 December 2011
5.	Joint Industrial Council for the Contract Cleaning Industry	19 December 2011

Appendix 5: Financial Report for 2025

Table 5.1 Labour Court outturn 2025.

Outturn	€
Pay	€2,2712,987
Non-pay	€457,061
Total	€3,170,048

Table 5.2 Main areas of non-pay expenditure.

Outturn	€
ICT	€103,395.16
Regional Hearings	€110,751.44
Office Equipment & Supplies	€31,365.40
Post / Telephones	€40,252.43

Prompt Payments

During 2025 the Court continued to comply with the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997 as amended by the European Communities (Late Payment in Commercial Transactions) Regulations, 2002.

Appendix 6: Labour Court Work Programme for 2025

Strategic Objective	Objective
Strategic Priority 1: Provide an efficient and high-quality service to court users	Deliver improved processing, listing and management of cases.
	Ensure that all scheduled Court sittings are supported
	Enhance public understanding of the Labour Court's role and services through updated public information and improved communication
	Develop appropriate customer service standards
Strategic Priority 2: Develop and support Court Members and administrative staff	Court members demonstrate a high level of competence and expertise in industrial relations and employment law
	Identify current and future professional development needs and implement measures to address and support member development
	Support administrative staff development by identifying and addressing current and future training needs and ensuring that all staff are provided with the skills, knowledge and experience to perform and develop within their roles
	Provide for knowledge transfer to ensure continuity of service when administrative staff move due to promotion, mobility, or retirement
	Enhance internal communications
Strategic Priority 3: Optimise technology and improve case management process	Generate efficiencies from greater use of digital and online service delivery
	Identify and implement more efficient processes and workflows supporting DETE's focus on developing workforce capability and embedding continuous improvement
	Enhance the Labour Court's website to provide improved and user-friendly access to information and online services for court users in keeping with DETE's commitment to high quality and transparent public services
Strategic Priority 4: Ensure effective governance	Full compliance with DETE governance requirements, including business planning, financial procedures, procurement, GDPR, FOI, records management and BCP
	Secure sustainable resourcing to ensure effective delivery of the Court's statutory mandate
	Embed robust riskmanagement practices to support organisational resilience

Appendix 7: Further information

Further information about anything contained in this Annual Report is available from:

The Labour Court
Lansdowne House
Lansdowne Road
Dublin 4
D04 A3A8

Phone: (01) 613 6666 or 0818 613666

Email: info@labourcourt.ie

Website: www.labourcourt.ie

Queries should be directed to the relevant section of the Labour Court:

About a particular case before the hearing

Programming Section 01 613 6666 or 0818 613666
Email info@labourcourt.ie

About a particular case after the hearing

Relevant Court Secretary: As indicated at the hearing

Joint Labour Committees, Registered Employment Agreements/Sectoral Employment Orders, Employment Regulation Orders

Relevant Court Secretary: As indicated at the hearing

General information about industrial relations and employment rights matters.

Workplace Relations Customer Services
01 6136700 or 0818 80 80 90

Notes

Notes

The Seal of the Court

The images here below might easily be described as the Labour Court's logo. But of course, they are much more than that. These images are that of the seal of the Labour Court, which obviously is something of significance and statutory importance.

The Industrial Relations Act of 1946 provided that the Labour Court would have an official seal which "shall be judicially noticed". This means that where the Court's seal is affixed to a document, and properly authenticated by means of the signature of an authorised person (usually the Chairman or Registrar of the Court) then no further evidence of its legal authenticity is required.

Though the seal is not required for a decision or recommendation of the Court to be valid (see paras. 11-16 of McCormack v Ashford Castle Hotel Ltd [2022] IEHC 188), when a party receives a written decision/recommendation from the Court, the document does bear an image of the seal at its head and also includes the electronic signature (a typed name) of the chairman of the division who heard the case.

However, where it is necessary for the Court to provide an authenticated document, a physical seal affixed with an embosser, and authenticated with an authorised signature, would be applied to the document. Thus, when a document which reflects a decision of the Court is required to be proved legally, the application of an authenticated seal of the Court comes into play.

As can be seen from the images (including the Court's embossed physical seal with raised lettering and images), the Court's seal has changed over the years.

Some of its features are easily identifiable. As the centrepiece to the image, the harp (based on the Trinity College/Brian Boru design) is one of Ireland's national emblems and is commonly used by Government departments and related bodies. In terms of legal symbolism, the floral images on either side of the harp are lengths of laurel wreath. Laurel wreath appears often in legal imagery, signifying power and authority. The scales of justice are another common legal image, depicting impartiality and balance. Finally, images of Celtic knotting represent, among other attributes, strength, wisdom and power.