IPAT publishes its annual report for 2025

Ireland saw a significant reduction in first-instance international protection applications in 2025, with 13,160 applications received compared with 18,561 in 2024, representing a decline of almost 30%. Despite this decrease, application levels remained high by historical standards, with 2025 recording the third-highest annual total on record.

The reduction in applications reflected a broader trend across Europe. However, the IPAT continued to face substantial demand, beginning the year with a large backlog and receiving a further 15,334 appeals during 2025. As a result, 18,864 appeals remained pending at year-end.

In response, the Tribunal achieved a record level of productivity, completing 6,254 appeals during 2025, more than double the number completed in the previous year and the highest annual output since its establishment in 2016. The Tribunal attributed this increase to operational efficiencies, expanded staffing and enhanced training programmes.

During 2025, 59 new Tribunal Members were appointed and received induction training, while a further three members joined in January 2026. By the end of that month, the Tribunal comprised 142 part-time and nine full-time members.

The Tribunal is also preparing for significant changes arising from Ireland’s implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum. From 12 June 2026, appeals relating to new international protection applications will fall under the remit of the new Tribunal for Asylum and Returns Appeals (TARA). Nevertheless, the existing Tribunal is expected to continue processing a substantial residual caseload, estimated to exceed 30,000 cases before its eventual dissolution.

Throughout 2025, the Tribunal worked closely with the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration to support implementation of the Pact, including the development of new appeals procedures and transitional arrangements.

The Tribunal reported maintaining a strong focus on quality and consistency in decision-making despite increased output. Judicial review proceedings were initiated in respect of 5.5% of Tribunal decisions during 2025, down from 7.4% in the previous year. The Tribunal attributed this to enhanced training, quality assurance processes, ongoing monitoring of decisions and the support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

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Further organisational developments included the establishment of a dedicated Legal Research Unit to strengthen legal analysis and promote consistency across decisions. The Tribunal also continued to make extensive use of remote hearing technology, while taking measures to address delays caused by hearing postponements.

In addition, the Tribunal secured operational support from the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), under which up to 30 experts will assist with file preparation, legal research, country-of-origin information analysis and interpretation services.

The Tribunal stated that these measures have strengthened its capacity to manage a growing workload while maintaining the quality, efficiency and fairness of the appeals process during a period of significant change across Ireland’s international protection system.

Source(s)

- International Protection Appeals Tribunal | An Binse um Achomharic i dtaobh Cosaint Idirnáisiúnta (29 April, 2026), [International Protection Appeals Tribunal Annual Report 2025], https://www.protectionappeals.ie/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/International-Protection-Appeals-Tribunal-Annual-Report-2025.pdf

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