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## **National specialised courts**

### **Ireland**

This section provides you with information on the organisation of specialised courts in Ireland by reference to the organisation of the courts generally. See [pages dealing with Organisation of Justice and Ordinary courts](#) for details of courts generally.

#### **Specialised Courts**

##### **Small Claims Court**

The Small Claims procedure provides an inexpensive and informal means for the resolution of consumer claims without requiring either party to be legally represented. The Small Claims Court operates within the District Court. This procedure is available for claims not exceeding €2,000 in value where a consumer buys goods or services, suffers minor damage to property, or seeks the return of a rent deposit. No court appearance is required for undisputed claims. If the claim is disputed and a settlement cannot be reached out of court, the case is tried by a judge of the District Court whose order may be appealed to the Circuit Court.

##### **Commercial Court**

The Commercial Court is effectively a specialist division of the High Court. One of its key features is its ability to deal with cases promptly. To achieve this, it has its own procedures designed to expedite the matters that appear in the list. These procedures are governed by

[Order 63A of the Rules of the Superior Courts](#).

The Court deals with matters that are categorised as 'commercial proceedings' under Order 63A, r1. These include disputes affecting company law, insolvency law, intellectual property, construction, administrative law and constitutional law. To be admitted to the Court under O 63A r1(a), the claim or counterclaim in the action must be worth at least €1,000,000. There is no threshold in respect of cases admitted under rule 1(b), which give discretion to the Commercial Court judge.

##### **The Drug Treatment Court**

The Drug Treatment Court Programme (DTC) operates within the District Court. It offers drug addicts convicted of non-violent crimes, an opportunity to escape the cycle of drugs, crime and prison. Suitable candidates are assessed on the basis of their motivation to commit to the programme.

##### **Other Tribunals**

A number of tribunals deal with income tax appeals, social welfare entitlements, claims under the Equality legislation, immigration applications, town planning and employment matters. These tribunals are not presided over by judges but by qualified specialists and their decisions are subject to appeal or review by the Circuit or High Court.

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