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How to enforce a court decision

When a Court is involved in solving a dispute, there are two steps that must be ensured at the end of the process. First, the Court must hand down a judgment and then the judgment needs to be enforced in practice.

To force the other party (defendant or your debtor) to comply with the judgment against him/her (for example to pay up), you will have to go to the enforcement authorities. They alone have the power to force the debtor to pay, calling on the forces of law and order if need be.

Under the [Brussels I Regulation \(recast\)](#) which governs the recognition and enforcement of judgments in cross border cases, if you have an enforceable judgment issued in the Union Member State, you can go to the enforcement authorities in other Member State where e.g. the debtor has assets without any intermediary procedure being required (the Regulation abolishes the 'exequatur' procedure). The debtor against whom you seek the enforcement may apply to the court requesting refusal of enforcement. The names and location of those competent courts and courts for further appeals are provided [here](#).

The purpose of enforcement is generally to recover sums of money, but it may also be to have some other kind of duty performed (duty to do something or refrain from doing something, such as to deliver goods or finish work or refrain from trespassing).

Different European procedures (such as the [European Payment Order](#), the [European Small Claims Procedure](#) and the [European Enforcement Order](#)) can be used in cross border civil cases, but for all of them, a judgment must be enforced in accordance with the national rules and procedures of the State of enforcement (usually where the debtor or his/her assets are).

In practice, you need to have an enforceable document (a court judgment or a deed) if you wish to apply for enforcement. The enforcement procedures and the authorities who handle them (courts, debt-collection agencies and bailiffs) are decided by national law of the Member State where enforcement is sought.

Please select the relevant country's flag to obtain detailed national information.

Related link

The [enforcement atlas](#), developed by an EU funded project, provides information on the enforcement procedures (procedures, requirements, competence, costs and timing) in the enforcement systems of the EU countries and of the UK.

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