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National justice systems

France

This section provides an overview of the organisation of the courts.

Organisation of the courts - ordinary courts and administrative courts

The structure of the courts

Ordinary courts

1. First instance:

Civil courts

General court (*tribunal judiciaire*)

Specialised civil courts (employment tribunal (*conseil de prud'hommes*), commercial court (*tribunal de commerce*), etc.)

Criminal courts

Police court (*tribunal de police*), dealing with minor offences (*contraventions*)

Criminal court (*tribunal correctionnel*), dealing with intermediate offences (*délits*)

Assize court (*cour d'assises*), dealing with serious offences (*crimes*)

2. Second instance: Courts of appeal (*cours d'appel*)

3. Court of Cassation (*Cour de cassation*)

Administrative courts

1. First instance

Administrative court (*tribunal administratif*)

Specialised administrative courts (financial courts, such as the regional auditors' office (*chambre régionale des comptes*), social welfare courts (*juridictions d'aide sociale*), professional disciplinary courts (*juridictions disciplinaires*)

2. Second instance:

Administrative courts of appeal (*cours administratives d'appel*)

Specialised administrative courts of appeal (*juridictions administratives d'appel spécialisées*), such as the Court of Auditors (*Cour des comptes*) or the Central Commission for Social Welfare (*Commission centrale d'aide sociale*)

3. Council of State (*Conseil d'Etat*)

More information can be found on the [Council of State website](#).

Legal databases

Access to legal databases in France is provided via the Internet as a public service. The [Légifrance](#) site covers:

[judgments of the Court of Cassation and the courts of appeal](#) (« CASS », « INCA » and « CAPP » databases)

[decisions of the Council of State](#)

[decisions of the administrative courts of appeal](#)

[decisions of some administrative courts](#) (in the « JADE » database).

Is access to these databases free of charge?

Access to these databases is free of charge.

Related links

[Finding competent court](#)

[Organisation of the courts - France](#)

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