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Family matters

Family law means all the legal rules applying to relations between persons who are connected with one another by descent (for example, the relationship between a child and its mother or father) or by marriage (or registered partnership).

Family law deals with matters such as marriage, divorce, the adoption of children, and various questions relating to parental responsibility (custody, access rights, and so on).

These rules vary from country to country, as they are closely linked to the history, culture and social development of each nation.

The European Union has the objective of determining common rules in family law, so that European citizens are not prevented from exercising their rights because they live in different countries of the European Union, or because at some stage in their lives they have moved from one country to another.

However, the Member States must all be in agreement for such rules to be adopted.

Please consult relevant subpages to find more information on:

[Divorce](#)

[Parental responsibility](#)

[Parental child abduction](#)

[Maintenance obligations](#)

[Property effects of marriage and registered partnership](#)

[Cross-border family mediation](#)

[Lawful removal of the child](#)

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