There are three levels of courts in the Republic of Cyprus. The Supreme Court (*Anótato Dikastírio*) and the Supreme Constitutional Court (*Anótato Syntagmatikó Dikastírio*), which hear, *inter alia*, cases at third instance, based on the authority conferred on them by the Constitution and relevant legislation, the Court of Appeal (*Efeteío*), which hears cases at second instance in which appeals are lodged against a decision of a court of first instance, and the following courts of first instance:
Administrative Court (*Dioikitikó Dikastírio*)
District Courts (*Eparchiaká Dikastíria*)
Assize Courts (*Kakourgiodikeía*)
Family Court (*Oikogeneiakó Dikastírio*)
Rent Control Tribunal (*Dikastírio Elénchou Enoikiáseon*)
Industrial Disputes Tribunal (*Dikastírio Ergatikón Diaforón*)
International Protection Administrative Court (*Dioikitikó Dikastírio Diethnoús Prostasías*)
Military Court (*Stratodikeío*)
Commercial Court (*Emporikó Dikastírio*) and
Admiralty Court (*Naftodikeío*)

General courts – Introduction

Supreme Constitutional Court

The Supreme Constitutional Court consists of nine judges, one of whom is the President of the Court. The Supreme Constitutional Court has the jurisdiction and authority conferred on it by the Constitution, unless otherwise specified in the relevant legislation. On referral by the Court of Appeal, the Supreme Constitutional Court hears appeals against decisions of the Administrative Court on matters of public law, major public interest, general public importance, or consistency of law on conflicting or contradictory decisions of the Court of Appeal. It rules at third and final instance on the basis of applications, following prior appeal review proceedings, on legal matters arising from decisions of the Court of Appeal, which relate either to a change in settled case-law or to the need for correct interpretation of a primary or secondary substantive provision of law, or to a major issue of public interest or of general public importance, or for the sake of consistency of law on conflicting or contradictory decisions of the Court of Appeal issued under its review jurisdiction. It also acts as second-instance judicial council with power to set aside decisions of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Supreme Court

The Supreme Court consists of seven judges, one of whom is the President of the Court. The Supreme Court exercises the jurisdiction and authority conferred on it by the Constitution, unless otherwise specified in the relevant legislation. On referral by the Court of Appeal, it hears appeals against decisions of courts with civil and/or criminal jurisdiction, including courts of special jurisdiction, on matters of major public interest or of general public importance, or for the sake of consistency of law on conflicting or contradictory decisions of the Court of Appeal. The Supreme Court rules at third and final instance, on the basis of applications, following prior civil or criminal appeal proceedings, on legal matters arising from decisions of the Court of Appeal, which relate either to a change in settled case-law or to the need for correct interpretation of a primary or secondary substantive provision of law, or to a major issue of public interest or of general public importance, or for the sake of consistency of law on conflicting or contradictory decisions of the Court of Appeal issued under its civil or criminal jurisdiction. It also rules on the retrial by the Court of Appeal or the criminal court of first instance, as applicable, of criminal cases in respect of which a conviction has been handed down, either as a final decision at first instance or on appeal, on the basis of new facts or evidence which, in its opinion, may overturn the decision in whole or in part. It receives requests for the disqualification of judges of any court other than the Supreme Constitutional Court, where such a request for disqualification has been rejected by the court concerned. Finally, it issues procedural rules on the operation of the Court of Appeal.
The Supreme Court has exclusive jurisdiction to issue the prerogative writs of Habeas Corpus, Mandamus, Certiorari, Quo Warranto and Prohibition.

Court of Appeal

The Court of Appeal is the court of second instance in Cyprus and, unless otherwise provided for, has jurisdiction to rule on all appeals against decisions of any court other than the Supreme Constitutional Court or the Supreme Court. As a rule, appeals are heard by three judges. The hearing of appeals is based on the records of the proceedings at first instance (except in exceptional cases where witness testimony may also be heard). Exercising its appellate jurisdiction, the Court of Appeal may uphold, alter or overturn the contested decision, or it may order a retrial.

District Courts

The District Courts hear at first instance all civil cases (except for admiralty cases) and criminal cases for offences punishable by a term of imprisonment of up to 5 years. Each administrative district in Cyprus has a District Court. Cases are heard by one judge and there is no jury.

Assize Courts

The Assize Courts hear criminal cases only. As a rule they try the most serious cases involving offences that are punishable by a term of imprisonment of over 5 years. Each Assize Court consists of three judges. Decisions are taken by majority vote. There is no jury.

Legal databases

There is not yet an official legal database. There are a number of private legal databases, some of which offer subscriber services while others provide free access.
They contain information on court decisions and primary legislation.

Related links

Supreme Court of Cyprus

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