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National ordinary courts

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Netherlands

Netherlands



This section provides you with information on the organisation of ordinary courts in the Netherlands.

District courts (*rechtbanken*)

There are 11 district courts in the Netherlands.

Each court is made up of several [divisions](#):

- Civil justice (conflicts between private individuals and/or organisations)
- Administrative law (conflicts between individuals or organisations and public authorities)
- Criminal law (criminal offences)

The court also has a sub-district (*kanton*) sector, in which the sub-district judge handles, inter alia, minor criminal and civil cases involving amounts of up to EUR 25 000.

Appeals

A party who does not accept the district court's judgment can appeal. Criminal and civil cases are heard by one of the four courts of appeal (*gerechtshoven*). In administrative cases, depending on the subject the appeal may be heard by:

- Courts of Appeal (*gerechtshoven*)
- The Central Appeals Tribunal (*Centrale Raad van Beroep*)
- The Trade and Industry Appeals Tribunal (*College van Beroep voor het Bedrijfsleven*)
- The Council of State (*Raad van State*), administrative disputes division (*Afdeling bestuursrechtspraak*)

Supreme Court (*Hoge Raad*)

The Supreme Court of the Netherlands is the highest court in the Netherlands in civil, criminal and tax law. The Supreme Court can overturn judgments, in particular those of the appeal courts (whose judgments can be challenged in the Supreme Court on points of law, a process known as *cassatie*). The Supreme Court is also responsible for ensuring legal uniformity and the development of Dutch law.

More information on how the judicial system is organised can be found on the rechtspraak.nl website.

Legal databases

The case-law database publishes a significant number of judgments. These decisions and judgments are made available to the public through inclusion in the database on the rechtspraak.nl website.

Is access to the database free of charge?

Yes, access is free of charge.

Related Links

[Dutch judiciary and the Supreme Court of the Netherlands](#)

[Information on the Dutch judicial system \(in English\)](#)

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