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National ordinary courts

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Czechia

Czechia



The court structure in the Czech Republic comprises 89 district courts, eight regional courts and the Supreme Court.

Ordinary courts — introduction

Jurisdiction in civil cases

District courts, regional courts, high courts and the Supreme Court of the Czech Republic are responsible for judging civil cases.

Courts of first instance

District courts hear and judge disputes and other legal cases arising from civil, employment, family and commercial relationships whenever no other court has material jurisdiction over them under the law.

Other matters that are not of a private nature (e.g. on the appointment and dismissal of arbitrators, on the annulment of an arbitration award, etc.) are to be heard and judged by the district courts in civil proceedings where the law so provides.

Cases that fall within the jurisdiction of a district court are usually ruled upon by a judge sitting alone.

Where the law so determines, employment and other matters are heard by a chamber consisting of a judge and two lay judges.

Regional courts act as courts of first instance in cases and disputes referred to in Sections 9(2) and 9a of the Code of Civil Procedure.

Proceedings before a regional court as a court of first instance are heard and ruled upon by a single judge; a chamber consisting of a president of chamber and two judges hears and rules on proceedings at first instance where the law so provides.

The Supreme Court rules at first instance on the basis of Section 51 of Act No 91/2012 on private international law. In those circumstances, the Supreme Court recognises the final rulings of foreign courts.

The Supreme Court sits as a chamber or a Grand Chamber.

Second instance

Where district courts hear the case at first instance, a regional court is the court of appeal (second-instance court).

Where regional courts hear the case at first instance, the high courts act as the courts of appeal.

The high court sits as a chamber consisting of a president of chamber and two judges unless there are separate legal provisions to the contrary.

Legal databases

Legislation of the Czech Republic can be found on the [official portal of the Czech government](#).

Is access to the legal database free of charge?

Yes, only this portal provides legislative texts free of charge.

Jurisdiction in criminal cases

District courts, regional courts, high courts and the Supreme Court of the Czech Republic are responsible for judging criminal cases.

Courts of first instance

Unless Act No 141/1961 on criminal proceedings determines otherwise, proceedings at first instance take place at the district court.

Criminal proceedings before a court are ruled upon by a chamber of judges or a single judge; the president of chamber or the single judge decides alone only where this is expressly provided for by law. District court chambers are composed of a president of chamber and two lay judges. A president of chamber or a judge may act as a single judge. Only a judge may act as president of chamber.

Regional courts hear proceedings at first instance regarding criminal offences in respect of which the law provides for a sentence of at least five years' imprisonment, or where an exceptional sentence may be imposed. Regional courts also act as courts of first instance in respect of criminal offences referred to in Section 17(1) of the Criminal Proceedings Act even if the minimum prison sentence is lower.

Regional courts act in chambers. A single judge rules in cases provided for in the laws on proceedings before the courts.

Regional court chambers are composed of

1. a president of chamber and two lay judges if they are acting as courts of first instance in criminal cases;
2. a president of chamber and two judges in other cases.

A president of chamber or a judge may act as a single judge. Only a judge may act as president of chamber.

Second instance

The higher regional court decides on appeals against judgments of a district court. The superior high court decides on appeals against judgments of a regional court at first instance.

The high court sits as a chamber consisting of a president of chamber and two judges unless there are separate legal provisions to the contrary.

Jurisdiction in administrative cases

The role of the judiciary in administrative matters is to protect the individual rights of natural and legal persons under public law.

This role is fulfilled by administrative courts. These are specialised chambers within the system of regional courts that act as courts of first instance.

Administrative courts are composed of: the president of the regional court, vice-presidents and judges. Individual

cases are heard by a chamber composed of three judges.

Administrative courts adjudicate on

1. complaints against administrative decisions issued by an executive body, a local or regional government body, a natural or legal person or other body empowered to adjudicate on the rights and obligations of natural and legal persons in public administration (hereinafter 'an administrative body');
2. protection against an administrative body's failure to act;
3. protection against unlawful intervention by an administrative body;
4. actions on matters of jurisdiction;
5. electoral matters and matters relating to local or regional referendums;
6. matters relating to political parties and political movements;
7. the revocation of a measure of a general nature or part thereof that is contrary to the law;
8. disciplinary matters relating to judges, court officials, state prosecutors and bailiffs;
9. matters relating to certain rules of professional conduct.

The Supreme Administrative Court is the administrative court of last instance and consists of the President of the Supreme Administrative Court, vice-presidents and judges. Individual cases are usually heard by a chamber composed of three judges.

Aside from hearing appeals, the Supreme Administrative Court decides on the dissolution of a political party or of a political movement, the suspension or resumption of their activities, on matters of jurisdiction and on the revocation of measures of a general nature or part thereof. The further substantive jurisdiction of the Supreme Administrative Court is laid down in specific laws.

Further details on the website [European Judicial Atlas in Civil Matters - Judicial system of the Czech Republic](#).

Further information can be found on the website: [Nejvyšší správní soud](#) (Supreme Administrative Court).

Related links

[Courts system](#)

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