Which country's court is responsible?

European Union law can determine which court handles a case when both parties to a dispute initiate proceedings in different EU countries.

For example, after a traffic accident between two persons living in Germany and France, respectively, it could be that they sue one another for damages in the Member State of their own domicile.

European Union (EU) law determines which courts of which Member States should hear the case, to avoid conflicting decisions. The general rule is that a person should be sued in the State where s/he is domiciled. Furthermore, other jurisdictional rules may be invoked as alternative in specific cases, for example, the person failing in performance of the contract can be sued at the place of performance of the obligation in question (e.g., in the place where the purchased goods should have been delivered). Special rules exist to protect groups such as consumers, workers and insured persons.

In family law, EU rules exist to determine where a dispute relating to divorce, parental responsibility or maintenance should be heard.

Please select the relevant country's flag to obtain detailed national information.

When you have determined the right Member State on the basis of the jurisdiction rules, then you need to find the competent court in practice.

The European Judicial Atlas in civil matters contains the names and addresses of all courts in the Member States competent in civil and commercial matters (courts of first instance, court of appeals, etc.) and geographical areas in which they have jurisdiction.

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