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**National justice systems**

France

This section provides an overview of the organisation of the courts.

**Organisation of the courts - ordinary courts and administrative courts**

**The structure of the courts**

**Ordinary courts**

**1. First instance:**

**Civil courts**

General court (*tribunal judiciaire*)

Specialised civil courts (employment tribunal (*conseil de prud'hommes*), commercial court (*tribunal de commerce*), etc.)

**Criminal courts**

Police court (*tribunal de police*), dealing with minor offences (*contraventions*)

Criminal court (*tribunal correctionnel*), dealing with intermediate offences (*délits*)

Assize court (*cour d'assises*), dealing with serious offences (*crimes*)

**2. Second instance: Courts of appeal (*cours d'appel*)**

**3. Court of Cassation (*Cour de cassation*)**

**Administrative courts**

**1. First instance**

Administrative court (*tribunal administratif*)

Specialised administrative courts (financial courts, such as the regional auditors' office (*chambre régionale des comptes*), social welfare courts (*juridictions d'aide sociale*), professional disciplinary courts (*juridictions disciplinaires*)

**2. Second instance:**

Administrative courts of appeal (*cours administratives d'appel*)

Specialised administrative courts of appeal (*juridictions administratives d'appel spécialisées*), such as the Court of Auditors (*Cour des comptes*) or the Central Commission for Social Welfare (*Commission centrale d'aide sociale*)

**3. Council of State (*Conseil d'Etat*)**

More information can be found on the [Council of State website](#).

**Legal databases**

Access to legal databases in France is provided via the Internet as a public service. The [Légifrance](#) site covers:

[judgments of the Court of Cassation and the courts of appeal](#) (« CASS », « INCA » and « CAPP » databases)

[decisions of the Council of State](#)

[decisions of the administrative courts of appeal](#)

[decisions of some administrative courts](#) (in the « JADE » database).

**Is access to these databases free of charge?**

Access to these databases is free of charge.

**Related links**

[Finding competent court](#)

[Organisation of the courts - France](#)

Last update: 19/04/2023

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