

## Ordinary courts - Cyprus



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There are courts of only two instances in the Republic of Cyprus: The Supreme Court (Ανώτατο Δικαστήριο), which rules on all appeals against judgments by a court of first instance, and the following courts of first instance:

- District Courts (Επαρχιακά Δικαστήρια)
- Assize Courts (Κακουργιοδικεία)
- Family Court (Οικογενειακό Δικαστήριο)
- Rent Control Tribunal (Δικαστήριο Ελέγχου Ενοικιάσεων)
- Industrial Disputes Tribunal (Δικαστήριο Εργατικών Διαφορών) and
- Military Court (Στρατοδικείο).

## Ordinary courts - Introduction

### Supreme Court

The Supreme Court is composed of thirteen judges, of whom one is the President. The Supreme Court has the following jurisdictions:

### Appellate Court

The Supreme Court hears all appeals from lower courts in civil and criminal matters. As a rule, appeals are heard by a panel of 3 judges. The hearing of the appeal is based on the record of the proceedings of the lower court (the Supreme Court only hears evidence in exceptional and very rare circumstances). In the exercise of its appellate jurisdiction the Supreme Court may uphold, vary or set aside the decision appealed from or it may order a re-trial.

### Review Court

The Supreme Court has exclusive jurisdiction to hear any recourse filed against decisions, acts or omissions by persons or organs exercising administrative authority. The Supreme Court may annul any executive administrative act that is in excess or abuse of power or contrary to the law or the Constitution.

### Prerogative writs

The Supreme Court has exclusive jurisdiction to issue the prerogative writs of *habeas corpus*, *mandamus*, *certiorari*, *quo warranto* and *prohibition*.

### Admiralty

The Supreme Court has original and appellate jurisdiction in admiralty cases. At first instance the case is heard by a single judge and on appeal the case is heard by the full bench.

### Election petitions

As an electoral court, the Supreme Court has exclusive jurisdiction to hear petitions concerning the interpretation and application of electoral laws.

### Constitutional matters

The Supreme Court has jurisdiction to rule on the constitutionality of any law and to resolve conflicts of power or competence which arise between the various organs of State. The Supreme Court also rules on the constitutionality of laws in connection with which the President of the Republic (Πρόεδρος της Δημοκρατίας) exercises his constitutional right of recourse.

### **District Courts**

The District Courts have jurisdiction to hear at first instance any civil actions (with the exception of admiralty cases) and any criminal cases for offences punishable by up to 5 years' imprisonment. There is a District Court in each administrative district of Cyprus. Cases are heard by a single judge and there is no jury.

### **Assize Courts**

The Assize Courts only try criminal cases. As a rule, only the most serious cases where the sentence for the offence exceeds 5 years are brought before the Assize Courts. Each Assize Court is composed of 3 judges. All decisions are taken by a majority. There is no jury.

### **Legal databases**

There is still no official legal database. There are a number of private legal databases, some of which provide subscriber services and some of which provide free access.

They contain information on court judgments and primary legislation.

### **Related Links**

[🔗 Supreme Court of Cyprus](#)

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Last update: 23/07/2019