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National ordinary courts

Bulgaria

This section sets out information on the Bulgarian judicial system.

Organisation of justice – judicial system

Courts of first instance in civil and criminal cases

District Courts

The main court of first instance is the district court. It examines all cases except those which are assigned to other courts by law. It examines civil, criminal and administrative cases. Decisions of district courts are subject to appeal before the respective provincial court.

The district court consists of judges and is headed by a chairperson.

Provincial courts

When acting as a **court of first instance**, the provincial court examines:

civil cases - actions to establish parentage, terminate an adoptive relationship, declare a person to be under judicial disability or lift such disability; actions to establish ownership of or real rights over a property if the value of the claim is higher than BGN 50 000; civil or commercial disputes over a sum of more than BGN 25 000 (with the exception of maintenance claims, claims under labour law or for the recovery of unauthorised expenditure); actions to establish an inadmissible, void or incorrect company registration for which the law provides that the provincial courts have initial jurisdiction; disputes subject to examination by a provincial court under other legislation.

criminal cases - cases relating to crimes under Articles 95 - 110, 115, 116, 118, 119, 123, 124, 131(2)(1) and (2), 142, 149(5), 152(4), 196a, 199, 203, 206 (4), 212(5), 213a(3) and (4), 214(2), 219, 224, 225b, 225c, 242, 243 - 246, 248 - 250, 252 - 260, 277a - 278e, 282 - 283b, 287a, 301 - 307a, 319a - 319f, 330 (2) and (3), 333, 334, 340 - 342, 343(1)(c), (3)(b) and (4), 349(2) and (3), 350(2), 354a(1) and (2), 354b, 356f - 356i, 357 - 360 and 407 - 419a of the Criminal Code, with the exception of cases falling under the remit of the specialised criminal court under Article 411a of the [Criminal Code](#).

A City Court is established in Sofia and has the powers of a provincial court. The [Sofia City Court](#) acts as a court of first instance for cases relating to crimes of a general nature committed by persons enjoying immunity or members of the Council of Ministers.

Provincial courts are located in the provincial centres. Within each provincial court's judicial area there are one or several district courts.

Courts of second instance in civil and criminal cases

The provincial courts, acting as **courts of second instance**, examine acts appealed against in district court cases, as well as other cases assigned to them by law.

As courts of second instance, the appellate courts examine acts appealed against in provincial court cases, as well as other court cases assigned to them by law.

Courts of third instance in civil and criminal cases

The [Supreme Court of Cassation](#) is the supreme judicial instance in criminal and civil cases. Its jurisdiction covers the entire territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Legal database

Each court in Bulgaria maintains a website which corresponds to the needs of the citizens, legal entities and administrative authorities. These websites provide information on the courts' structure and activities, as well as information on ongoing cases and cases which are already closed.

Name and URL of the respective databases

The website of the [Supreme Judicial Council](#) provides a detailed list of courts in Bulgaria, including their addresses and websites (accessible in Bulgarian only).

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