MINISTÈRE
DE LA JUSTICE

Liberté
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THE FRENCH LEGAL SYSTEM

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Technical terms appear in French and in italics in the text

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1. Constitution and balance of power

France has been a **Republic** with a **semi-presidential system since the constitutional reform of 1962.**[1] The French legal system's supreme law is the **Constitution of 4 October 1958**, the founding text of the Fifth Republic, adopted by referendum on 28 September 1958.[2]

The separation of powers principle, enshrined in Article 16 of the Declaration of Human and Civic Rights *(Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen)* of 1789, has constitutional value. It entails in particular the specific nature of judicial functions, which should not be encroached upon by the legislator, the Government or any administrative authority.[3]

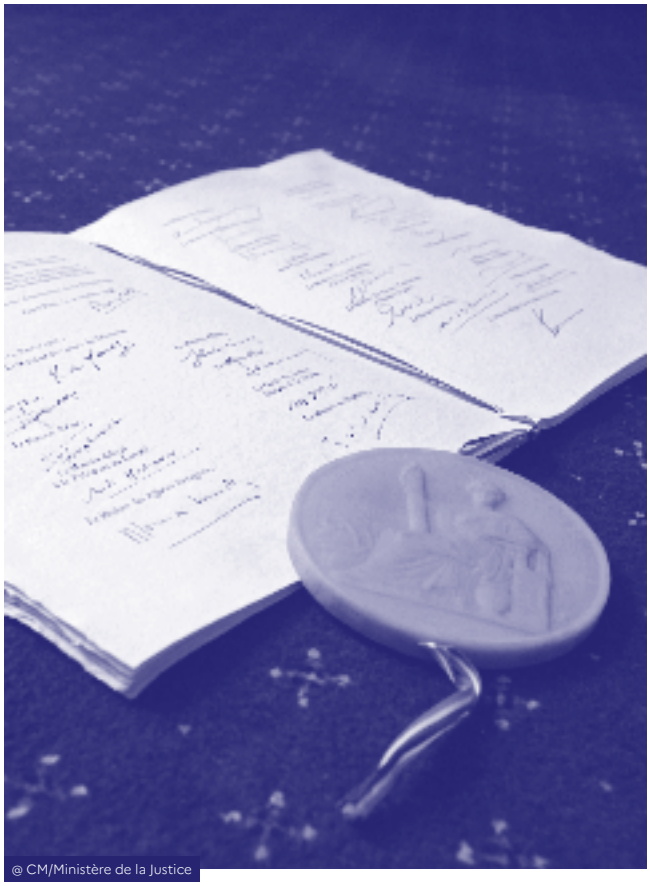
1. Mixed political system that features characteristics of both parliamentary and presidential regimes:
   1) Direct election of the Head of State (in France, the President of the Republic);
   2) A Head of State distinct from the Head of Government (in France, the Prime Minister);
   3) Government accountability to Parliament (in France, to the National Assembly).
   Comment caractériser le régime politique de la Ve République ?| vie-publique.fr
2. Constitutional Council | Conseil constitutionnel
3. https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/la-constitution/la-separation-des-pouvoirs

1.1. CONSTITUTION

The Constitution has been amended twenty-five times since being promulgated.[4] It refers to a body of texts defined by French doctrine as the **constitutionality corpus** *(bloc de constitutionnalité)*.[5] These are:

- Articles 1 to 89 of the Constitution of 4 October 1958;
- the Preamble to the Constitution of 4 October 1958;
- as well as the texts to which the Preamble refers:
  - » the Declaration of Human and Civic Rights *(Déclaration des droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen)* of 26 August 1789, adopted by the National Constituent Assembly during the French Revolution ;
  - » the Preamble to the Constitution of 27 October 1946 (known as the Constitution of the Fourth Republic), on the basis of which the Constitutional Council (*Conseil constitutionnel*) has identified a number of "fundamental principles recognised by the laws of the Republic" (*principes fondamentaux reconnus par les lois de la République - PFRLR*). The Preamble also sets out "principles considered as being particularly necessary to our times" (*principes particulièrement nécessaires à notre temps - PPNT*).
  - » the 2004 Charter for the Environment.[6]

All these texts have equal constitutional value.[7]



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1.2. THE EXECUTIVE POWER

1.2.1. PRESIDENT AND GOVERNMENT

The executive power is exercised by the President of the Republic and the Government, which is headed by the Prime Minister[8].

The **President of the Republic** is elected by direct universal suffrage for a five-year term. The President ensures due respect for the Constitution and can make use of their arbitration powers to ensure the proper functioning of public authorities and the continuity of the State. The President is the guarantor of national independence, territorial integrity and compliance with treaties (Article 5 of the Constitution).

To that end, the President has exclusive powers, including the power to appoint the Prime Minister (Article 8), the right to dissolve the National Assembly (Article 12) and the exercise of extraordinary powers (Article 16). The President presides over the Council of Ministers (Article 9). In other matters, the President shares his powers, which requires countersignature by the Prime Minister and, where relevant, by the Ministers concerned (Article 19).[9]

The **Government** determines and conducts national policy. It directs the civil service and reports to Parliament (Article 20).

The **Prime Minister** directs the Government's actions and ensures the implementation of legislation (Article 21). Ministers are appointed by the President of the Republic upon proposal by the Prime Minister (Article 8).

4. https://www.vie-publique.fr/dossier/267859-les-revisions-de-la-constitution-sous-la-ve-republique
5. https://www.vie-publique.fr/fiches/275483-quest-ce-que-le-bloc-de-constitutionnalite
6. Charter for the environment | Conseil constitutionnel
7. https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/la-constitution/qu-est-ce-que-la-constitution-a-quoi-sert-elle
8. https://www.vie-publique.fr/questions-reponses/294708-president-de-la-republique-premier-ministre-quels-sont-leurs-pouvoirs
9. https://www.elysee.fr/la-presidence/le-role-du-president

1.2.2. FOCUS ON THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

The Ministry of Justice drafts laws *(projets de loi)* and secondary legislation in a wide range of areas, such as, for example, family law, civil procedure or criminal procedure.

It ensures the proper functioning of judicial courts. To that effect, it administers the budget as well as human and material resources, including equipment, buildings, and IT systems.

The Ministry of Justice is responsible for individuals placed under its supervision by the Judicial Authority, including juveniles in danger *(mineurs en danger)* or in conflict with the law, convicted persons *(condamnés)* or persons awaiting trial *(prévenus)*.

It develops and implements public policies relating to justice, including, for example, access to law and to the justice system and the prevention of domestic violence.[10]

The Ministry of Justice (also known as ***la chancellerie***) comprises the Minister of Justice (also known as the ***garde des Sceaux***[11]***)***, a cabinet (made up of advisers) and a spokesperson, an Inter-ministerial Delegate for Victims Support *(délégué interministériel à l'aide aux victimes)*, a Senior Official for Gender Equality *(haut fonctionnaire à l'égalité femmes-hommes)*, a General Secretariat, a General Inspectorate of Justice and five directorates : the Civil Affairs and Seals Directorate *(direction des affaires civiles et du sceau - DACS)*, the Directorate of Criminal Affairs and Pardons *(direction des affaires criminelles et des grâces - DACG)*, the Directorate of Judicial Services *(direction des services judiciaires - DSJ)*, the Directorate of Prison and Probation *(direction de l'administration pénitentiaire - DAP)* and the Directorate of Judicial Youth Protection *(direction de la protection judiciaire de la jeunesse - DPJJ)*.[12]

1.3. LEGISLATIVE POWER

Parliament *(Parlement)* passes statutes, oversees the Government's actions and evaluates public policies (Article 24 of the Constitution).[13]

It is bicameral and includes:

- the **National Assembly** *(Assemblée nationale)*[14]: comprising a maximum of 577 members of parliament *(députés)*, elected by direct suffrage for a five-year term (unless dissolved);
- the **Senate** *(Sénat)*[15]: made up of 348 senators elected by indirect suffrage for a six-year term, half of whom are renewed every three years.

1.4. JUDICIAL AUTHORITY

Title VIII of the Constitution is devoted to the Judicial Authority, which does not comprise administrative justice. The Judicial Authority comprises **judges** (*juges* - also called *magistrats du siège*) - and **prosecutors** (*procureurs* - also called *magistrats du parquet*)[16]. Together, judges and prosecutors form **a single body,** the **Judiciary** *(la magistrature)*.

Article 64 provides that the President of the Republic is the guarantor of the independence of the Judicial Authority and is to be assisted in this mission by the **High Council for the Judiciary.** It further states that the status of the members of the Judiciary is set by an organic law and that judges are irremovable from office.

Furthermore, Article 66 stipulates that no one can be arbitrarily detained and that compliance with this principle is ensured by the Judicial Authority, **guardian of the freedom of the individual**, in the conditions laid down by statute.

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10. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/ministere-justice/missions-organisation/missions
11. Literally: "keeper of the seals"
12. http://www.justice.gouv.fr/le-ministere-de-la-justice-10017/
13. https://www.vie-publique.fr/fiches/19485-comment-definir-le-parlement
14. https://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/ ; Welcome to the english website of the French National Assembly - Assemblée nationale
15. https://www.senat.fr/connaitre-le-senat/role-et-fonctionnement.html
16. Prosecutors speak standing up at hearings while judges remain seated.

2. Legal system

The French legal system is based on **continental** (Romano-Germanic) legal tradition. Its rules derive from a **range of sources,** which are primarily **written** and are organised in hierarchical order: the Constitution, international treaties and European law, statutes, regulations, case law, custom and legal academic opinions, and contracts.[17]

The oldest French **codes** (notably the 1804 Civil Code and the 1810 Criminal Code) are the result of work carried out at the beginning of the 19th century, under the influence of Napoleon Bonaparte. Today, there are 77 codes, which are the result of major codification work, carried out without making changes to the law as it stands *(codification à droit constant)*.[18]

17. https://www.vie-publique.fr/dossier/274624-les-sources-du-droit-droit-et-grands-enjeux-du-monde-contemporain
18. https://www.vie-publique.fr/fiches/38055-quest-ce-que-la-codification-des-lois ; https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/liste/code?etatTexte=VIGUEUR&etatTexte=VIGUEUR_DIFF

2.1. KEY PRINCIPLES OF CIVIL LAW AND CIVIL PROCEDURE

Key principles of French civil law include:

- In contract law: the **freedom of contract (Article 1102 of the Civil Code[19])**, defined as the freedom to contract or not to contract, to choose one's contracting party and to decide on the content and form of the contract within the limits set by law.
- In civil liability law: the **principle of liability**. Article 1240 of the Civil Code provides that any human action whatsoever, which causes harm to another, creates an obligation in the person by whose fault it occurred to make reparation for it.
- In property law, Article 17 of the Declaration of Human and Civic Rights states that: 'Since the **right to property** is inviolable and sacred, no one may be deprived thereof, unless legally ascertained public necessity obviously requires it, and fair and prior indemnity has been paid'.
- In family law:
  - » **marital freedom:** the freedom to marry (with marriage being defined since 2013 as the union of two people of opposite or of the same sex), the freedom not to marry and the right to dissolve a marriage.[20]
  - » **filiation equality** (Article 6-2 of the Civil Code).

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Chapter I of Title I of Book I of the Code of Civil Procedure[21] outlines the guiding principles for civil proceedings, including:

- the **principle of party initiative** *(principe dispositif)*, under which roles are divided between the parties, who exercise control over civil legal proceedings by initiating proceedings, defining the subject matter and scope of the dispute, alleging facts and producing evidence, and the judge, who is in charge of ensuring the orderly conduct of the proceedings, in particular by setting deadlines and ordering necessary measures, and for deciding the case in accordance with the law.
- the **adversarial principle** *(principe du contradictoire* or *audiatur et altera pars)* and its corollaries, including the **freedom to choose one's counsel, public hearings** and **fair proceedings**.
- The principle of cooperation between the judge and the parties, which implies that, beyond their traditional role of settling the dispute, the judge must not only reconcile the parties, but also help them assess the most appropriate method of resolution for the case, whether contentious or amicable. There are various alternative dispute resolution procedures, such as conciliation, mediation, agreement to attempt to settle *(procédure participative)* and amicable settlement hearings *(audience de règlement amiable)*.[22]
- Civil proceedings[23] are initiated by referring a matter to court, either by summons (*assignation*), whereby the defendant is served with a notice to appear in court by a judicial commissioner, or by an application *(requête)* filed with the court clerk's *(greffe)*, who then summons the parties.

Proceedings then involve three stages:

- the investigation phase *(instruction)*, which may be conducted by a pre-trial civil judge *(juge de la mise en état)*; once the case file is complete, the judge issues an order closing the pre-trial phase and sets the hearing date;
- the hearing *(débats)*, at which the parties present their claims, arguments and evidence; legal representation may be mandatory depending on the competent court and the amount at stake;
- the judgment, which is issued after the court's deliberation.

Summary proceedings *(référé)* are available in urgent cases, allowing the judge to order interim measures on an expedited basis, while ensuring respect for the adversarial principle.[24]

An order on request *(ordonnance sur requête)* is an interim decision delivered by a judge designated to hear matters when the circumstances of the dispute justify a departure from the adversarial principle.[25]

19. Full text of the Civil Code: https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/texte_lc/LEGITEXT000006070721/2024-09-17/
20. Since 2017, divorce by mutual consent has been contractual as a matter of principle. It is established in an agreement in the form of an act under private signature and countersigned by the spouses' lawyers, then filed with a notary, in accordance with Article 229-1 of the Civil Code.
21. Code of Civil Procedure: www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/texte_lc/LEGITEXT000006070721/
22. https://www.justice.fr/accord-amiable
23. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/justice-civile/procedure-civile
24. https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F1378
25. https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/section_lc/LEGITEXT000006070716/LEGISCTA000006165206/

2.2. KEY PRINCIPLES OF CRIMINAL LAW AND CRIMINAL PROCEDURE

Criminal offences are divided into **three categories**[26]:

- petty offences *(contraventions)*: the least serious offences, classified into five categories. They are primarily punishable by fines (with maximum amounts ranging from € 38 to € 3,000) and cannot be punished by imprisonment.
- misdemeanours *(délits)*: intermediate offences. Penalties incurred include imprisonment with a maximum ranging from 2 months to 10 years *(emprisonnement)*, electronic monitoring *(peine de détention à domicile sous surveillance électronique – DDSE-peine)*, community service *(travail d'intérêt général)*, fines *(amende)*, day fines *(jour-amende)*, completion of an accredited programme *(stage)*, penalties entailing deprivation or restriction of rights *(peines privatives ou restrictives de droits)* and repair penalty *(sanction-réparation)*. Imprisonment may be suspended *(ordinary suspension - sursis simple)*, suspended with probation *(sursis probatoire)* or subject to adjustment *(aménagement de peine)*.
- felonies *(crimes)*: the most serious offences, punishable by imprisonment *(réclusion criminelle)* with a maximum ranging from 15 years to life imprisonment.

According to Article 66-1 of the Constitution, "No one shall be sentenced to death". The first title of the Criminal Code includes additional key principles, such as the principle of the legality of offences and penalties *(principe de légalité des délits et des peines)*, the strict interpretation of criminal law and the principle of non-retroactivity. The preliminary Article of the Code of Criminal Procedure[27] also sets out a number of principles, including the fair and adversarial nature of criminal proceedings, the separation between prosecuting and judging authorities, the presumption of innocence and the rights of the defence.

Criminal proceedings generally follow **an inquisitorial model**.[28]

Police inquiries *(enquête de police)* are conducted by judicial police officers or agents, under the supervision of the Chief Prosecutor, examining inculpatory and exculpatory evidence. In cases provided for by the Code of Criminal Procedure and as required by the investigation, suspects (mis en cause) may be questioned in a voluntary police interview *(audition libre)* or under police custody *(garde à vue)*. Either way, suspects are informed of their rights, including the right to see a doctor, to notify their family and friends if they are held in custody, and to be assisted by a lawyer.

Following the conclusion of the police inquiry, the prosecutor, in accordance with the principle of discretionary prosecution *(principe de l'opportunité des poursuites)*, may close the case without further action *(classer l'affaire sans suite)*, propose an alternative to prosecution *(alternative aux poursuites)*, such as a citizenship course or criminal mediation for example, or prosecute a suspect.

In cases of felonies, the prosecutor must request for a judicial investigation *(information judiciaire* or *instruction judiciaire)* to be conducted by an investigating judge *(juge d'instruction)*. This is optional for misdemeanour cases, and will usually be reserved to the most complex cases. The investigative judge examines inculpatory and exculpatory evidence *(instruit à charge et à décharge)* and carries out any investigative actions necessary to establish the truth (such as witness hearings, wiretaps, seizures etc). When there is significant or consistent evidence *(indices graves ou concordants)*, the investigating judge may charge *(mettre en examen)* any person suspected of having committed or participated in an offence. They may be placed under judicial supervision *(contrôle judiciaire)*, pre-trial electronic monitoring *(assignation à résidence sous surveillance électronique - ARSE)*, or pre-trial detention *(détention provisoire - DP)* by the liberties and detention judge *(juge des libertés et de la détention)*. Once the judicial investigation is over, if the investigating judge deems the evidence sufficient, they order the referral of the person under investigation to the competent criminal court, after hearing the observations of the parties and the submissions *(requisitions)* of the public prosecutor.

The criminal trial takes place before the Police Court *(tribunal de police)* for petty offences, the Correctional Court *(tribunal correctionnel)* - composed of one or three judges - for misdemeanours, and either the Departmental Criminal Court *(cour criminelle départementale)* or the Assize Court *(cour d'assises)* for felonies. If the trial court finds the defendant guilty, it will sentence them based on the nature and seriousness of the offence committed, their personality as well as their financial, family and social circumstances.[29]

Finally, Penalty Enforcement Courts *(juridictions de l'application des peines)* set the main terms for the enforcement of custodial sentences and a number of non-custodial sentences, by guiding and monitoring the conditions of their application.

26. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/justice-penale/infractions-penales ;
see also Articles 131-1 et seq. of the Criminal Code : https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/texte_lc/LEGITEXT000006070719/

27. https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/texte_lc/LEGITEXT000006071154/

28. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/justice-penale/procedure-penale; https://www.vie-publique.fr/parole-dexpert/268594-procedure-penale-modeles-accusatoireinquisitoire

29. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/justice-penale/peines

3. Judicial system: orders and levels of courts

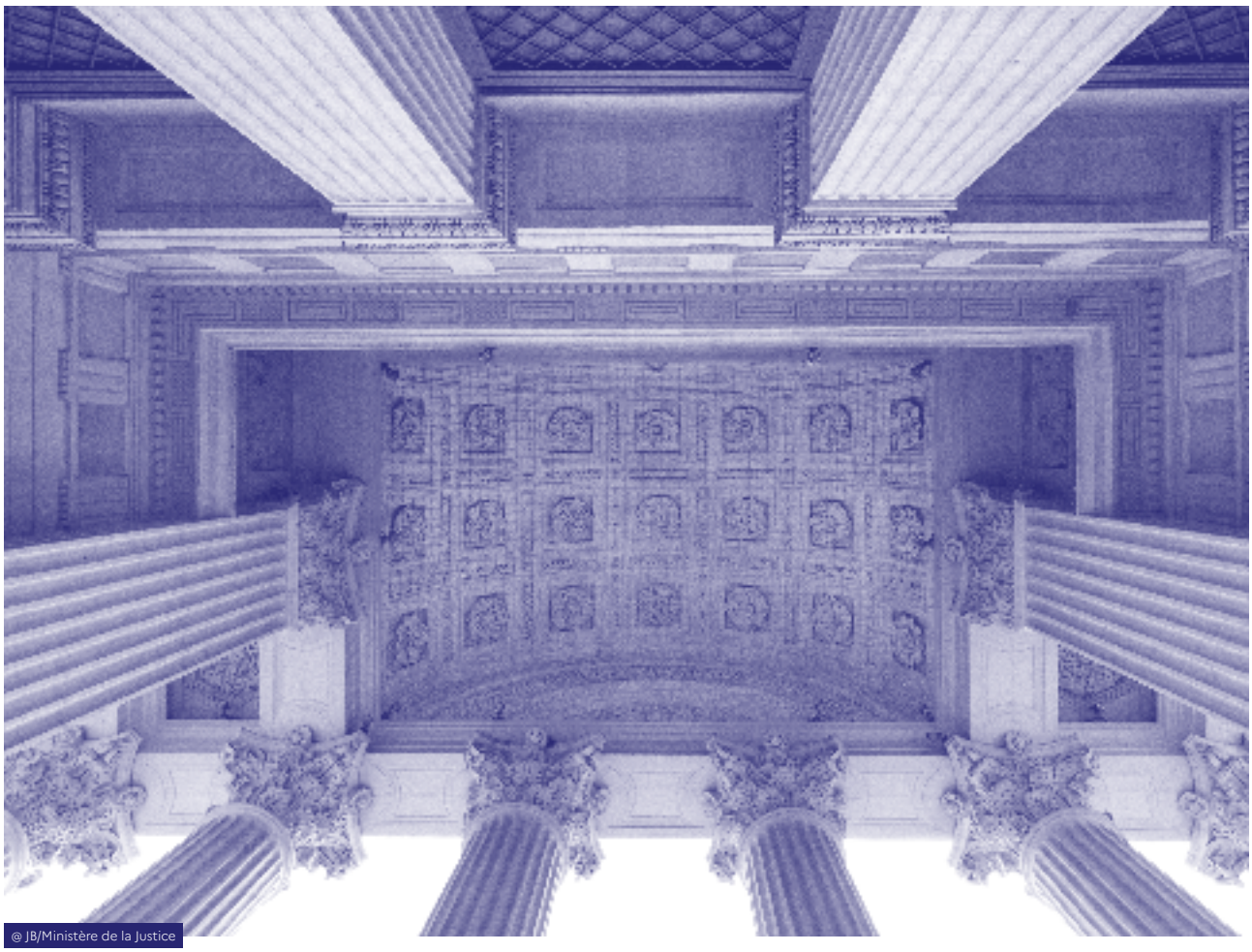
French courts are divided into the **judicial** and the **administrative orders** *(ordres judiciaire et administratif)*.[30]

- Judicial courts settle disputes between private individuals and impose penalties on perpetrators of criminal offences.
- Administrative courts settle disputes between public authorities and private individuals, as well as disputes arising between public authorities.
- Conflicts of jurisdiction between the two orders are settled by the **Court of jurisdictional disputes** *(Tribunal des conflits)*.[31]

The **Constitutional Council** *(Conseil constitutionnel)* is in charge of ensuring that laws comply with the Constitution.

30. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/cours-tribunaux; https://www.vie-publique.fr/fiches/268519-quelle-est-lorganisation-de-la-justice-en-france

31. http://www.tribunal-conflits.fr/ : this court comprises an equal number of members of the Council of State and the Court of Cassation.



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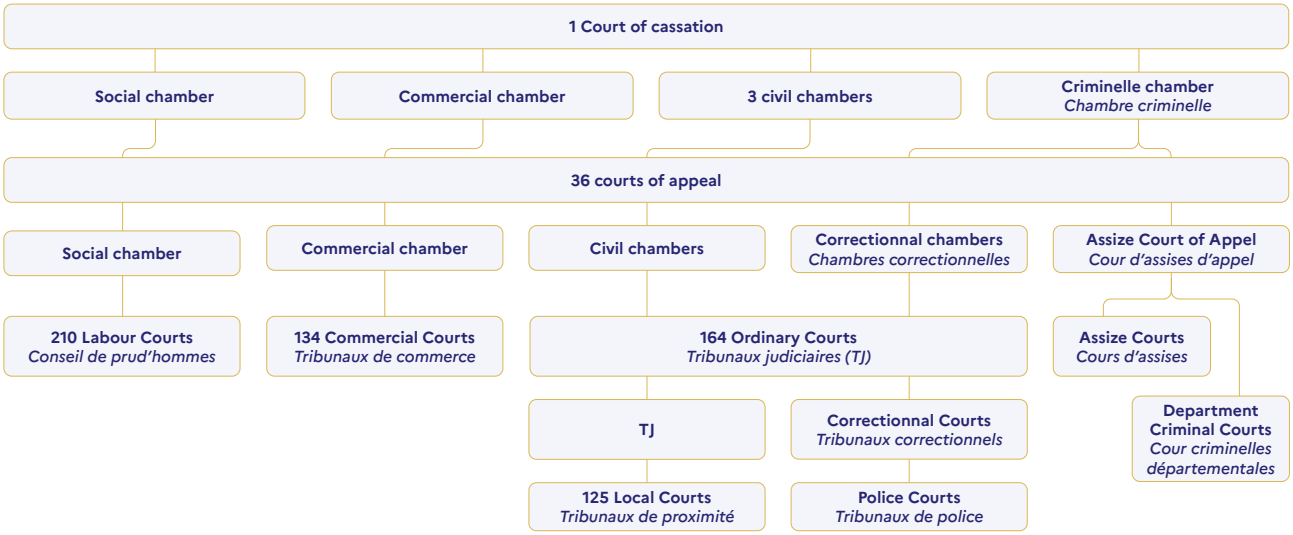
3.1. JUDICIAL JUSTICE

Judicial courts are organised according to the following pyramidal structure:



There are also a number of additional courts in overseas departments, countries and territories: the Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon Superior Appeal Court *(tribunal supérieur d'appel);* the Ordinary Courts *(tribunaux de première instance)* of Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon, Papeete, Mata-Utu and Nouméa ; the Mixed Commercial Courts *(tribunaux mixtes de commerce)* of Papeete, Nouméa, Saint-Denis, Saint-Pierre, Mamoudzou, Cayenne, Fort-de-France, Basse-Terre and Pointe-à-Pitre ; and the Employment tribunals *(tribunaux du travail)* in Nouméa, Papeete, Nuku-Hiva and Uturoa.

3.1.1. COURTS OF FIRST INSTANCE

- ***In civil matters***[32]

The **Ordinary Court** *(tribunal judiciaire)*, which is competent in civil matters, has exclusive jurisdiction over a number of subject matters (personal status, annulment of civil status acts, succession etc...) but also residual jurisdiction for all civil and commercial matters that do not fall within the jurisdiction of another court. Most Ordinary Courts also encompass **Local Courts** *(tribunaux de proximité)*, which deal with small-scale everyday life civil disputes (with claims limited to €10,000).[33]

The **juvenile court judge**, or children's judge *(juge des enfants)* and the **protection litigation judge** *(juge des contentieux de la protection)* are specialised judges officiating in Ordinary Courts in civil matters. **The family court judge** *(juge aux affaires familiales)*, the **judge for summary proceedings** *(juge des référés)*, the **pre-trial judge** *(juge de la mise en état)* and the **enforcement judge** *(juge de l'exécution)* are generalist judges[34] appointed to civil divisions by the president of the court.

Some Ordinary Courts also include a **social division** *(pôle social)*, which has jurisdiction over disputes between social security funds *(caisses de sécurité sociale)* and users. This division is presided over by an Ordinary Court judge assisted by two lay judges, one representing employees, and the other representing employers and self-employed workers.

There are three additional **specialised civil courts:**

The **Commercial Court** *(tribunal de commerce)* settles disputes between traders and, in some cases, between private individuals and traders, as well as disputes concerning commercial transactions. It also deals with companies facing difficulties *(entreprises en difficulté)* through liquidation or receivership proceedings for example. It is made up of lay judges *(juges consulaires)* who are merchants or company directors or managers, elected by their peers and who carry out their duties on a voluntary basis. They are assisted by commercial clerks, which carry out various tasks, including maintaining the **Trade and Companies Register** *(registre du commerce et des sociétés)*.[35]

The **Employment tribunal** *(conseil des prud'hommes)* hears individual disputes between employees (or apprentices) and employers. It is a joint tribunal, made up of an equal number of employees and employers *(conseillers prud'hommes)*, appointed upon recommendation of trade unions and professional organisations.[36] If members hearing a case are tied, the tribunal will then be chaired by a professional judge from the Ordinary Court *(procédure de départage)*.

The **Land Court** *(tribunal paritaire des baux ruraux)* is a non-permanent court. It has jurisdiction over disputes between farm owners and workers. It is presided over by an Ordinary Court judge and comprises four lay assessors, namely two landlords and two farmers.[37]

32. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/lorganisation-cours-tribunaux/lordre-judiciaire/juridictions-civiles
33. https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F35125
34. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/acteurs-justice/magistrats/magistrats-du-siege
35. Litige commercial : déroulement d'une affaire devant le tribunal de commerce | Entreprendre.Service-Public.fr
36. https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F2360
37. https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F1793

- ***In criminal matters***[38]

The **Police Court** *(tribunal de police)* tries petty offences *(contraventions)* committed by adults. It sits at the Ordinary Courts and is composed of a single judge, although most cases are dealt with without a hearing. The **Correctional Court** *(tribunal correctionnel)* sits at Ordinary Courts and tries misdemeanours *(délits)* committed by adults, such as theft or serious violence for example. Judgements are either delivered by three judges *(formation collégiale)*, or by a single judge *(juge unique)* for offences listed in Article 398-1 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and punishable by up to five years' imprisonment.

The **juvenile court judge** (also called children's judge - *juge des enfants*), **the investigating judge** *(juge d'instruction)*, **the liberties and detention judge** *(juge des libertés et de la detention)* and the **penalty enforcement judge** *(juge de l'application des peines)* are specialised judges officiating in Ordinary Courts in criminal matters.[39]

The **Assize Court** is a departmental court with jurisdiction over felonies *(crimes)*. At first instance, it is made up of 3 judges and 6 citizens drawn by lot, known as jurors *(jurés)*. By way of exception, the **Departmental Criminal Court** *(cour criminelle départementale)* tries adults accused of felonies punishable by a maximum of 15 or 20 years' imprisonment, such as rape or armed robbery for example, except in cases of repeat offences and in first instance only. It is composed of 5 judges.[40]

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There are also 8 **Specialised Interregional Courts** *(juridictions interrégionales spécialisées - JIRS)*, made up of prosecutors and investigating judges. They have jurisdiction over two types of offences, when these are particularly complex:

- organised crime *(crime organisé)*: drug trafficking, trafficking in human beings, aggravated procuring, organised group offences *(infractions en bande organisée)*, etc.
- financial crime: misuse of company assets *(abus de biens sociaux)*, illegal work, VAT fraud, counterfeiting, corruption, etc.

In each Ordinary Court, the **public prosecution office** *(parquet)* is headed by the Chief prosecutor *(procureur de la République)* assisted by deputy prosecutors *(procureurs adjoints)*, senior prosecutors *(vice-procureurs)* and junior prosecutors *(substituts du procureur de la République)*. They are responsible for representing the Public Prosecution Service *(ministère public)* before Correctional Courts, Juvenile Courts, investigating judges and Civil Courts. Prosecutors working in the same public prosecution office are considered as forming an indivisible team and being interchangeable.[41]

There are also two specialised and autonomous public prosecution offices with national jurisdiction, attached to the Paris Ordinary Court. The **National Financial Prosecution Office** *(parquet national financier - PNF)*, headed by the Financial public prosecutor, which deals with the most complex economic and financial crimes.[42] The **National Antiterrorism Prosecution Office** *(parquet national antiterroriste - PNAT)*, headed by the Antiterrorism prosecutor, has jurisdiction over the most complex offences relating to terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, crimes against humanity, acts of torture committed by State authorities, enforced disappearances and war crimes.

38. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/lorganisation-cours-tribunaux/lordre-judiciaire/juridictions-penales
39. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/acteurs-justice/magistrats/magistrats-du-siege
40. https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F1487
41. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/acteurs-justice/magistrats/magistrats-du-parquet
42. https://www.tribunal-de-paris.justice.fr/75/actualites-mensuelles-parquet-national-financier

3.1.2. COURTS OF APPEAL[43]

The **Court of Appeal** *(cour d'appel)* is the court of second instance. It has jurisdiction when one of the parties lodges an appeal against a judgement delivered by a court of first instance in civil, commercial, social or criminal matters. The Court of Appeal reviews the case, re-examining both the facts and applicable laws.

The Court of Appeal is divided into several specialised divisions:

- the correctional appeals division *(chambre des appels correctionnels)* hears appeals against judgements delivered by Correctional Courts and Police Courts,
- the investigation division (chambre de l'instruction) hears appeals against decisions delivered by investigating judges and liberties and detention judges,
- the sentencing enforcement division (chambre de l'application des peines) examines appeals against decisions of Penalty Enforcement Courts,
- civil divisions *(chambres civiles)* hear appeals against judgments from Ordinary Courts and Local Courts,
- the social division *(chambre sociale)* hears appeals against decisions by Employment tribunals and social divisions of Ordinary Courts and Land Courts,
- the commercial division (chambre commerciale) hears appeals against judgments of Commercial Courts.

Each division is composed of three professional judges: the President of the division and two judges (who are called counsellors - *conseillers*).

The prosecutor general *(procureur général)*, advocates general *(avocats généraux)* and prosecutor general deputies *(substituts généraux)* represent the public prosecution at hearings.

In Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon there is no Court of Appeal but a Superior Appeal Court[44], made up of a President (who is a professional judge) and two assessors chosen among French citizens aged over twenty-three, enjoying civic, civil and family rights and presenting guarantees of competence and impartiality. The prosecutor at the Superior Appeal Court is also the prosecutor at the Court of First Instance.

In criminal matters, appeals on a judgment by the Departmental Criminal Court or the Assize Court are referred to an Assize Court of appeal, composed of nine jurors and three judges.

3.1.3. THE COURT OF CASSATION[45]

As **the highest court** in the French judicial order, the Court of Cassation *(Cour de cassation)* is responsible for unifying and overseeing the interpretation of the laws, thereby ensuring equal treatment for all.

The Court of Cassation reviews the application of the law made by lower courts and does not re-examine the facts underlying the dispute. If the Court takes the view that the law has not been properly applied, it quashes the judgement *(arrêt de cassation)*: the challenged judgement is invalidated and the case is sent back to a Court of Appeal or to a Court of First Instance for retrial.[46]

Cases can also be referred to the Court of Cassation for advisory opinions when, during proceedings, a lower court faces a new point of law that raises serious difficulties of interpretation.

The Court also plays a role with regards to the constitutionality of laws as it is in charge, when parties raise issues of constitutionality before the lower courts *(question prioritaire de constitutionnalité – QPC)*, of ensuring that the criteria to refer an application to the Constitutional Council for a priority preliminary ruling are met.

Finally, the Court submits proposals for reforms to the President of the Republic and the Minister of Justice.

The Court of Cassation has three civil divisions; a commercial division, a social division and a criminal division. Each division is composed of a President and counsellors *(conseillers)*, all of whom are judges.

The prosecutor general and advocates general represent the general public prosecution office *(parquet général)* attached to the Court of Cassation.

43. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/lorganisation-cours-tribunaux/lordre-judiciaire/cour-dappel
44. Article L513-6 of the French Code of Judicial Organisation.
45. The Court of Cassation is the highest court of the judicial system which has jurisdiction to hear cases in civil, commercial, social or criminal matters to control the right application of the law by the inferior courts: https://www.courdecassation.fr/
46. Some decisions are issued in first and last instance *(en premier et dernier resort)* by courts of first instance. For example, judgments on civil claims up to €5,000 may only be challenged through cassation and not appeal.

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3.2. ADMINISTRATIVE JUSTICE[47]

Citizens, associations or companies may bring an action before the administrative court to:

- Request the total or partial annulment of an administrative or tax decision,
- Hold the public administration liable,
- Challenge the validity of municipal, cantonal, regional or European elections.

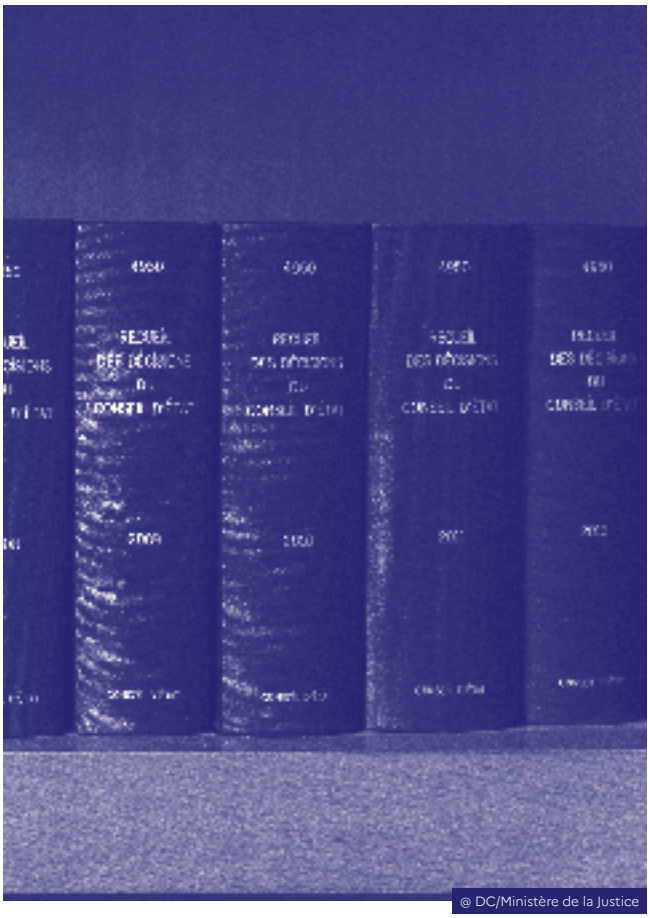
Administrative courts also rule on disputes between administrative bodies.

In France, there are:

- 42 **Administrative Tribunals** *(tribunaux administratifs)*. Proceedings take place in two stages. The Judge-rapporteur *(juge rapporteur)* examines the case and the parties' arguments and prepares the hearing. The public rapporteur *(rapporteur public)* provides an independent opinion on the issues raised by the case, which is presented during the judgment phase. At the conclusion of this phase, judges deliver their decision.[48]
- 9 **Administrative Courts of Appeal** *(cours administratives d'appel)*.[49]
- A **Council of State** *(Conseil d'Etat)*[50], the highest administrative court, which:
  - » Hears cases involving the administration: in most cases, it rules on disputes following decisions made by Administrative Tribunals and Administrative Courts of Appeal, but some disputes may also be directly referred when the challenged measure originates from an authority with national competence (the President of the Republic, the Government and Ministries, independent administrative authorities);
  - » Issues advisory legal opinions to the Government and Parliament on laws and regulations before they are debated and voted upon in Parliament or implemented;
  - » Drafts studies on legal issues and public policy, either on its own initiative or at the request of administrative authorities;
  - » Manages Administrative Tribunals, Administrative Courts of Appeal and the National Asylum Court *(Cour nationale du droit d'asile)*.[51]

In addition, there are **specialised administrative courts** such as, for example, the National Asylum Court *(Cour nationale du droit d'asile)*, which reviews appeals against decisions by the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons[52] *(Office français de protection des réfugiés et des apatrides)* related to asylum applications, or the Parking Fines Tribunal *(Tribunal du stationnement payant)*. Their decisions may be challenged before the Council of State.[53]

Finally, **Financial Courts** oversee the use of public funds and sanction any misuse thereof, with the Audit Court *(Cour des comptes)* being the highest supervisory institution.[54]



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47. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/justice-administrative
48. https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F2479
49. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/lorganisation-cours-tribunaux/lordre-administratif/cour-administrative-dappel
50. https://www.conseil-etat.fr/en
51. https://www.cnda.fr/
52. https://www.ofpra.gouv.fr/en.
53. https://www.conseil-etat.fr/qui-sommes-nous/tribunaux-et-cours/missions#anchor4
54. https://www.ccomptes.fr/en

3.3. CONSTITUTIONAL JUSTICE

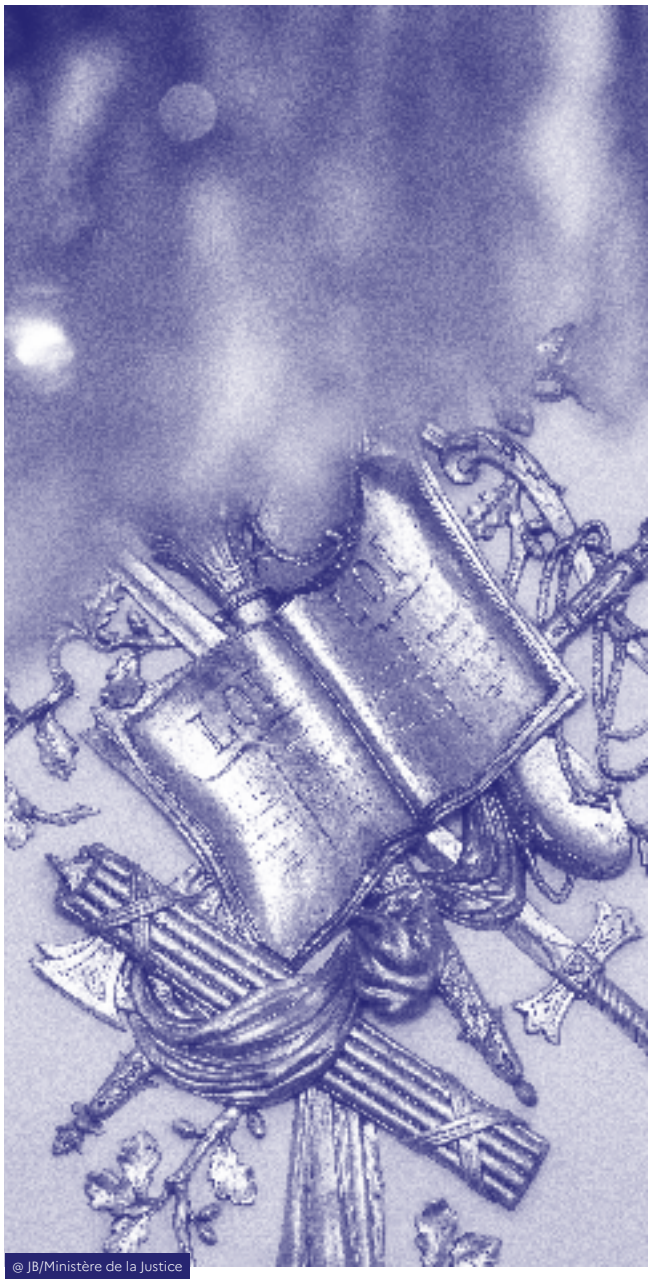
The **Constitutional Council**[55], established by the Constitution of 4 October 1958, is composed of nine members appointed for a single nine-year term. Every three years, the President of the Republic, the President of the Senate, and the President of the National Assembly each appoint one new member. Former Presidents of the Republic are also ex officio members of the Constitutional Council. One of its members is appointed by the President of the Republic as President of the Constitutional Council.

The Constitutional Council has jurisdiction over two categories of disputes:

- **normative disputes** *(contentieux normatif)*:
  - » As the judge of the constitutionality of laws, the Constitutional Council conducts either:
    - ▪ Ex ante reviews *(contrôle a priori)*, which can either be mandatory, for organic laws *(lois organiques)* and parliamentary rules of procedure *(règlements des assemblées parlementaires)*, or optional (for instance, the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, the President of the National Assembly or the Senate, or a group of at least 60 deputies or 60 senators can decide to refer a law to the Constitutional Council prior to promulgation);
    - ▪ Ex post reviews *(contrôle a posteriori)*, upon referral by the Council of State or the Court of Cassation whereby it controls whether a legislative provision already in force infringes the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution; this process is known as priority preliminary ruling on the issue of constitutionality (*question prioritaire de constitutionnalité - QPC*);[56]
  - » The Constitutional Council rules on the division of powers between legislative statute *(lois)* and executive regulations *(règlements)*. Matters may be referred either in the course of the legislative process by the President of the House (National Assembly or Senate) or the Prime Minister, or, after completion of the process, by the Prime Minister, who may seek to downgrade a measure enacted as law to an executive regulation;
  - » The Constitutional Council may be called upon to verify whether the conditions for presenting a draft law *(projet de loi)* comply with the requirements set out by an organic law;
  - » The Council also rules on the distribution of powers between the State and some overseas territories *(collectivités d'outre-mer)*;
- **electoral and referendums disputes:** the Constitutional Council oversees the regularity of the election of the President of the Republic and of referendums, the results of which it proclaims. The Council also decides on the legality of parliamentary elections and of the rules governing the eligibility of candidates. Additionally, the Council intervenes when a potential situation of incompatibility arises.

Furthermore, the Constitutional Council has an advisory role in the implementation of Article 16 of the Constitution (concerning full powers of the President of the Republic in times of crisis, that is in the event of a serious and immediate threat to the institutions of the Republic and if the regular functioning of the public authorities is interrupted). It also has an advisory role in electoral matters.

The decisions of the Constitutional Council are binding on public authorities and all administrative and judicial bodies. They are not subject to appeal.



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55. https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/en
56. For further details, see: https://qpc360.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/

4. Status and training of judges, prosecutors and other justice professionals

4.1. JUDGES AND PROSECUTORS

The status of judicial Judges and prosecutors is governed by the Ordinance of 22 December 1958, introducing the Organic Law organising the status of the Judiciary.[57] They form one single body. The Judiciary comprises approximately 9,000 judges and prosecutors.[58] All members of the Judiciary may be appointed as judges or prosecutors during their career.

Placed under the authority of the Ministry of Justice, the **members of the public prosecution office** *(membres du parquet)* are subject to a hierarchical structure and receive general instructions from the Ministry of Justice. However, instructions may not be given in individual cases. Prosecutors are removable from office.

They prosecute criminal offences in accordance with the criminal policy defined by the government, take part in local public policies on security and crime prevention, enforce final criminal judgments, protect youth in danger and intervene in certain civil and commercial proceedings to defend public order.[59]

Judges are in charge of applying the law by issuing decisions in accordance with the law, impartially and in the name of French people *(au nom du peuple français)*. Their status guarantees their independence and their irremovability *(inamovibilité)*.[60]

The **High Council for the Judiciary** *(Conseil supérieur de la magistrature - CSM)* is a constitutional body responsible for assisting the President of the Republic in their role as guarantor of the independence of the Judicial Authority *(autorité judiciaire)*. Its composition is governed by Article 65 of the French Constitution.[61]

The High Council for the Judiciary has the following competences:[62]

- It provides an opinion on all judicial appointments. It makes proposals on approximately 400 judges' senior positions that are binding on the President of the Republic.
- It acts as a disciplinary committee on judges or prosecutors' acts that may constitute disciplinary misconducts and it decides on the relevant disciplinary sanction for matters involving judges.
- A litigant *(justiciable)* may refer a matter to the High Council for the Judiciary when they allege that a disciplinary misconduct has been committed by a judge or a prosecutor in the exercise of their duties.
- The plenary session *(formation plénière)* of the High Council for the Judiciary responds to requests for opinions made by the President of the Republic under Article 64 of the Constitution and rules on matters relating to the ethics *(déontologie)* of judges and prosecutors and on any matter relating to the functioning of the justice system that may be referred to it by the Minister of Justice.

The Council runs an ethical support and monitoring service available to any judge and prosecutor who may require confidential advice on any personal ethical issue.

The Organic Law of 20 November 2023 entrusts the Council with the drafting of a new code of ethics *(charte de déontologie)* for judges and prosecutors to replace the current Compendium of Judiciary's ethical obligations *(Recueil des obligations déontologiques*[63]*)*.

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57. https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000000339259/
58. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/documentation/etudes-et-statistiques/references-statistiques-justice-2023
59. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/acteurs-justice/magistrats/magistrats-du-parquet
60. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/acteurs-justice/magistrats/magistrats-du-siege
61. Composition & Organization | Conseil Supérieur de la Magistrature
62. http://www.conseil-superieur-magistrature.fr/le-csm/nos-missions
63. https://www.conseil-superieur-magistrature.fr/sites/default/files/atoms/files/gb_compendium.pdf

The Organic Law of 8 August 2016 introduced an **Ethics Committee** *(Collège de déontologie)* which, in strict confidence, delivers written opinions on the conduct that a judge or prosecutor should adopt when faced with an ethical issue. It may also be consulted on issues raised by a declaration of interests. It conducts its work in complete confidentiality and benefits from full independence when formulating an opinion. It has no decision-making or arbitration powers. The opinions delivered by the Ethics Committee are available, in an anonymised format, on the website and intranet of the Court of Cassation.[64]

The **National School for the Judiciary**[65] *(École nationale de la magistrature)* organises entrance examinations *(concours d'entrée)*[66] and provides compulsory initial and continuing training for judicial judges et prosecutors. It also trains other professionals performing judicial functions[67], as well as foreign judges and prosecutors.

Administrative judges are independent from the administration and cannot be transferred without their consent. Their independence is guaranteed by law and by the autonomous management of the administrative courts, which is ensured by the Council of State.

The careers, and any disciplinary proceedings, of administrative judges are the responsibility of the High Council of Administrative Tribunals and Courts *(Conseil supérieur des tribunaux administratifs et des cours administratives)*.

The members of the Council of State constitute a separate body. They are irremovable from office and are promoted on the basis of seniority.[68]

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64. https://www.courdecassation.fr/la-cour-de-cassation/reperes/deontologie-et-discipline/college-de-deontologie-des-magistrats-de
65. https://www.enm.justice.fr/lecole/presentation
66. https://www.enm.justice.fr/concours/les-concours/se-reperer : There are several ways to qualify as a judge or a prosecutor: students with a minimum of four years of higher education can take the 1st entrance exam whilst professionals from the public or private sector can take the 2nd and 3rd entrance exams or a professional entrance exam. Initial training lasts 31 months, or 12 months for candidates who passed the professional exam. These options have been reformed by the Organic Law of 20 November 2023.
67. https://www.enm.justice.fr/formations/les-formations-professionnelles-specialisees
68. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/acteurs-justice/magistrats/magistrats-administratifs

4.2. OTHER LEGAL AND JUDICIAL PROFESSIONS

Judicial courts clerks *(greffier)* are civil servants attached to the Ministry of Justice. Clerks are responsible for ensuring that legal proceedings run smoothly and authenticate court documents *(actes juridictionnels)*.[69] They assist judges and prosecutors and draft decisions and indictments according to their instructions. They report to the directors of court registry services *(directeurs des services de greffes judiciaires)*, who oversee the operation of all registry services within a court. The National School for Clerks *(Ecole nationale des greffes - ENG)* trains court registry staff *(agents des services judiciaires)*.[70]

Commercial clerks *(greffier)* are members of an independent profession serving the commercial justice system. They assist judges and authenticate decisions handed down by Commercial Courts. They are supervised by the Public Prosecution Office and its supervisory authority, the Minister of Justice.[71] There is a National Council of Commercial Court Clerks *(Conseil national des greffiers des tribunaux de commerce)*.[72]

Prison staff *(personnel pénitentiaire)* look after convicted individuals *(personnes condamnées)* or defendants awaiting trial *(prévenus)*. The Probation services *(services pénitentiaires d'insertion et de probation - SPIP)* work both inside and outside prisons.[73]

The **Judicial Youth Protection Services** *(protection judiciaire de la jeunesse - PJJ)* look after children and youth in danger or in conflict with the law.[74]

The **National Gendarmerie** is an armed force entrusted with police duties. It operates under the supervision of the Ministry of the Interior *(ministère de l'Intérieur)* but is placed under the authority of the Armed Forces Ministry *(ministère des Armées)* for the execution of its military missions.[75] The **National Police**[76] is placed under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior. National Police officers and gendarmes have civil servant status. They share the same code of ethics and carry out the same duties, but in different areas of jurisdiction. Police areas are essentially urban, while gendarmerie areas are mostly peri-urban, consisting of medium-sized towns or rural areas.[77]

Lawyers *(avocats)* are self-employed and independent professionals. Their main role is to assist and represent their clients in court. They may also provide legal advice to facilitate the amicable resolution of disputes. All lawyers are registered by the Bar Council *(conseil de l'Ordre)*, to a Bar Association *(barreau)* in the jurisdiction where they practice.[78] In 2024, there were over 76,000 lawyers in France.

The National Bar Council *(Conseil national des barreaux)* standardises and develops the rules and practices of the legal profession[79], organises initial and continuing training for lawyers, decides on the admission of foreign lawyers and represents the profession in France and abroad.[80] The profession is open to holders of the Certificate of Aptitude for the Lawyer Profession *(certificat d'aptitude à la profession d'avocat - CAPA)*. Initial training is provided by the Regional Centres for Professional Training for Lawyers *(centres régionaux de formation professionnelle d'avocats - CRFPA)* after university studies.[81]

69. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/acteurs-justice/personnels-greffe
70. https://www.eng.justice.fr/organisation-leng
71. Le greffier des tribunaux de commerce | Ministère de la justice ;
72. Conseil National des Greffiers des Tribunaux de Commerce
73. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/acteurs-justice/personnels-penitentiaires
74. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/acteurs-justice/personnels-protection-judiciaire-jeunesse
    see also: https://www.justice.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/2025-06/presentation_DPJJ_english.pdf
75. https://www.gendarmerie.interieur.gouv.fr/notre-institution
76. https://www.police-nationale.interieur.gouv.fr/
77. https://www.police-nationale.interieur.gouv.fr/dossiers/police-nationale-et-autres-forces-de-securite/quelles-sont-differences-entre-gendarmerie
78. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/acteurs-justice/professionnels-du-droit/lavocat
79. As such, it has established the national internal regulations of the profession:
    https://www.cnb.avocat.fr/fr/reglement-interieur-national-de-la-profession-davocat-rin.
80. https://www.cnb.avocat.fr/fr/les-missions-du-conseil-national-des-barreaux
81. https://www.cnb.avocat.fr/fr/toutes-les-conditions-dacces-la-profession

Notaries are legal professionals vested with public authority *(mission d'autorité publique)* who draft authentic deeds *(actes authentiques)* on behalf of their clients. They practise their profession independently.[82] The Superior Council of Notaries *(Conseil supérieur du notariat)* is the professional body authorised to speak on behalf of French notaries.[83] In 2024, there were 17,305 notaries in France.

Justice commissioners *(commissaires de justice)* are public and ministerial legal officers *(officiers publics et ministériels)* who enforce court decisions and enforcement orders and conduct judicial sales. This profession is the result of the merger of two professions: that of bailiffs *(huissiers de justice)* and of judicial auctioneers *(commissaires-priseurs judiciaires)*.[84] The National Chamber of Justice Commissioners *(Chambre nationale des commissaires de justice)*, created in 2019, is the professional body representing the profession.[85]

Official administrators and receivers *(administrateurs et mandataires judiciaires)* are independent professionals appointed by civil and commercial courts to safeguard the business activity and jobs in companies experiencing financial difficulties.[86]

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82. https://www.notaires.fr/fr/profession-notaire/role-du-notaire-et-ses-principaux-domaines-dintervention/le-role-du-notaire ; https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/acteurs-justice/professionnels-du-droit/notaire ; Home | Notaires de France
83. The Superior Council of Notaries (CSN) | Conseil supérieur du notariat
84. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/acteurs-justice/professionnels-du-droit/commissaire-justice
85. https://commissaire-justice.fr/
86. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/acteurs-justice/professionnels-du-droit/ladministrateur-mandataire-judiciaire

5. Enforcement of sentences and the prison system

Article 707 of the Code of Criminal Procedure defines the **general principles governing the enforcement of sentences**.[87]

Among the objectives pursued are the integration or rehabilitation of convicted individuals, enabling them to act as responsible members of society by abiding to its rules and in accordance with its interests, and avoid committing further offences. During the course of a sentence being served, changes in the convicted person's personality and material, family and social circumstances must be taken into account. In addition, any convicted person who is incarcerated must also benefit, whenever possible, from a gradual release process and return to community. Victims also have rights during the enforcement phase of the sentence.

The **Public Prosecution Office** *(ministère public)* is responsible for enforcing all criminal sentences handed down by criminal courts. **Judges and courts responsible for enforcing sentences** *(juges et juridictions de l'application des peines)* set the main terms and conditions for the enforcement of custodial sentences as well as those of a number of non-custodial sentences, and are in charge of guiding and monitoring their enforcement.[88]

Under the authority of the Minister of Justice since 1911, the **Directorate of Prison and Probation** *(direction de l'administration pénitentiaire)*, is one of the five directorates within the Ministry of Justice and counts 43,600 members of staff. It comprises:

- a central administration;
- decentralised services: interregional directorates *(directions interrégionales)*, prisons *(établissements pénitentiaires)* and Probation Services *(services pénitentiaires d'insertion et de probation - SPIP)*;
- the National Prison Intelligence Service *(service national de renseignement pénitentiaire)*;
- the National School for Prison and Probation Services *(École nationale d'administration pénitentiaire - ENAP)*
- the Agency for Community Service and Professional Integration *(agence du travail d'intérêt général et de l'insertion professionnelle)*

The Directorate of Prison and Probation has a dual mission:

- supervising individuals entrusted to its care by the Judicial Authority, by ensuring they remain in detention. It is in charge of both pre-trial measures and sentences, which are enforced either in the community or in prison;
- preventing recidivism, a task carried out by all staff, particularly rehabilitation and probation officers. This involves preparing the rehabilitation of individuals and monitoring measures and sentences carried out in the community, in collaboration with public and community partners.[89]

The **Penitentiary Code** came into force on 1 May 2022.[90]

87. https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/id/LEGISCTA000006121331
88. See articles 712-1 et seq. of the Code of Criminal Procedure
89. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/ministere-justice/missions-organisation/direction-ladministration-penitentiaire
90. https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/texte_lc/LEGITEXT000045476241/

6. Juvenile Justice

The juvenile Justice system has two main roles: caring for **youth in danger**, under the civil justice system, and monitoring and punishing **children and juveniles who have committed criminal offences,** under the criminal justice system.[91]

Minors must be given special protection when they are at risk of danger. Administrative measures may be implemented by the **Child Welfare Service** *(aide sociale à l'enfance - ASE)*. When a minor is deemed in danger or in the event of serious and imminent danger, the prosecutors and juvenile court judges take over in the form of judicial protection.[92]

In 2002, the Constitutional Council[93] identified the following **fundamental principles** recognised by the laws of the Republic in relation to juvenile criminal Justice: the mitigation of juvenile criminal liability based on age, the primacy of education over punishment by seeking measures appropriate to the offender's age and personality, and the specialisation of courts and procedures. The preliminary title of the Juvenile Criminal Justice code *(Code de la justice pénale des mineurs - CJPM)*[94] elaborates on these main principles. In particular, it presumes a lack of discernment for children under the age of 13, and lays down the excuse of minority (the mitigation of the sentence due to the age) and the primacy of education over punishment (a sentence should only be imposed as a last resort, in cases where educational measures prove insufficient).

In addition, the entire criminal procedure has been adapted. The juvenile court judge *(juge des enfants)* and the Juvenile Court *(tribunal pour enfants)* try misdemeanours *(délits)*. The Juvenile Court tries felonies *(crimes)* committed by juveniles under the age of 16. Felonies committed by juveniles aged between 16 and 18 are tried by the Juvenile Assize Court (cour d'assises des mineurs).[95]

With some exceptions, the juvenile court judge is responsible for enforcing the sentences handed down by these trial courts.

91. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/justice-mineurs
92. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/justice-mineurs/protection-mineurs-danger
93. https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/decision/2002/2002461DC.htm
94. https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/section_lc/LEGITEXT000039086952/LEGISCTA000039087859/
95. https://www.justice.gouv.fr/justice-france/justice-mineurs/justice-penale-mineurs

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Ministry of Justice website:
http://www.justice.gouv.fr/

Other legal information websites:
https://www.justice.fr/
Les fiches | vie-publique.fr
Justice | Service-Public.fr (this website includes an automatic translator into English.)

Official website for the dissemination of law:
https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/

Website of the Court of Cassation:
https://www.courdecassation.fr/

Website of the National School for the Judiciary:
https://www.enm.justice.fr/

Statistics:
https://www.justice.gouv.fr/documentation/etudes-et-statistiques/references-statistiques-justice-continue

Every year, a booklet compiles key figures on the activities and resources of the Ministry of Justice.
It is translated into English:
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