

## JUDICIAL SYSTEM OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

A court is an institution administering justice and established by law. In pursuance of the fair and impartial court decisions and on purpose to prevent any interference in the court activities the Constitution and the Law on Courts establish that in the administration of justice courts shall be independent from other government institutions, officials, political parties, organisations and other persons. The law prescribes the liability for the interference in the judicial activities.

Court decisions may be reviewed only by courts of the higher instance and only in accordance with the procedure prescribed by law.

The system of courts, their competence, the system of court organisation, activity, administration, as well as the system of self-governance of courts, also the status of judges, their appointment, career, liability and other issues related to the judicial activities are regulated by the Constitution, the Law on Courts and other legal acts.

A court system of the Republic of Lithuania is made up of **courts of general jurisdiction** and **courts of special jurisdiction**.

The Supreme Court of Lithuania (1), the Court of Appeal of Lithuania (1), regional courts (5) and district courts (54) are courts of general jurisdiction dealing with civil and criminal cases. District courts also hear cases of administrative offences coming within their jurisdiction by law. The regional courts, the Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court of Lithuania have the Civil Division and the Criminal Division.

The Supreme Administrative Court of Lithuania (1) and regional administrative courts (5) are courts of special jurisdiction hearing disputes arising from administrative legal relations.

**A district court** is first instance for criminal, civil cases and cases of administrative offences (assigned to its jurisdiction by law), cases assigned to the jurisdiction of mortgage judges, as well as cases relating to the enforcement of decisions and sentences. Judges of a district court also perform the functions of a pre-trial judge, an enforcement judge, as well as other functions assigned to a district court by law.

**A regional court** is first instance for criminal and civil cases assigned to its jurisdiction by law, and appeal instance for judgements, decisions, rulings and orders of district courts. The Chairman of a regional court organises and controls the administrative activities of district courts and their judges within the territory of his activities in accordance with the procedure prescribed by law.

**The Court of Appeal** is appeal instance for cases heard by regional courts as courts of first instance. It also hears requests for the recognition of decisions of foreign or international courts and foreign or international arbitration awards and their enforcement in the Republic of Lithuania, as well as performs other functions assigned to the jurisdiction of this court by law. The Chairman of the Court of Appeal organises and controls the administrative activities of the regional courts and their judges in accordance with the procedure prescribed by law.

**The Supreme Court of Lithuania** is the only court of cassation instance for reviewing effective judgements, decisions, rulings and orders of the courts of general jurisdiction. It develops a uniform court practice in the interpretation and application of laws and other legal acts.

**A regional administrative court** is the court of special jurisdiction established for hearing complaints (petitions) in respect of administrative acts and acts of commission or omission (failure to perform duties) by entities of public and internal administration. Regional administrative courts hear disputes in the field of public administration, deal with issues relating to the lawfulness of regulatory administrative acts, tax disputes, etc. Before applying to an administrative court, individual legal acts or actions taken by entities of public administration provided by law may be disputed in the pre-trial procedure. In this case disputes are investigated by municipal public administrative dispute commissions, district administrative dispute commissions and the Chief Administrative Dispute Commission.

**The Supreme Administrative Court** is first and final instance for administrative cases assigned to its jurisdiction by law. It is appeal instance for cases concerning decisions, rulings and orders of regional administrative courts, as well as for cases involving administrative offences from decisions of district courts. The Supreme Administrative Court is also instance for hearing, in cases specified by law, of petitions on the reopening of completed administrative cases, including cases of administrative offences. The Supreme Administrative Court develops a uniform practice of administrative courts in the interpretation and application of laws and other legal acts.