Civil law (or Romano-Germanic law) is one of the world’s great legal systems. It and common law both owe much to the French legal system.

Many countries throughout history have modeled their legal systems on French law. Studying law in France affords many international students an opportunity to examine the roots of their home country’s legal system whereas students from common law countries become acquainted with the major facets of the “other” legal system.

Legal education in France emphasizes critical analysis and fosters questions about what law is, but also what it should or could be. Therefore, the knowledge students acquire leads them to think critically about law. Over time, the rule of law has been changed, transformed, and replaced. Of course, understanding it is critical, but equally important is being able to interpret it, analyze it, and critique it. This makes it possible to assess the scope of new laws and to understand their stakes.

The French approach to legal studies prepares students for legal careers (lawyers, judges, clerks of court, etc.), as well as for administrative or management careers in the private and public sectors, or any other profession requiring an ability to understand legal, administrative, or human resources issues. Such careers may be in France, but also of European or international scope.

**INTERNATIONAL**
The public interest group “Justice Coopération Internationale” (JCI; Justice International Cooperation) brings together the French Ministry of Justice, the French Court of Cassation (judicial supreme court) and the Council of State (administrative supreme court), the French courts, the École Nationale de la Magistrature (national school for the judiciary), the École Nationale de l’Administration Pénitentiaire (national school for penitentiary administration), the Conseil National des Barreaux (national bar association), the Conseil Supérieur du Notariat (high council of the French notariat) and the Chambre Nationale des Huissiers (national chamber of bailiffs). Its objective is to develop legal and judicial cooperation through multilateral cooperation programs implemented by the European Union and other international donors such as the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The École Nationale de la Magistrature (ENM) has cooperation agreements with the high councils and schools of a dozen countries (Albania, Brazil, China, Spain, Italy, Lebanon, Poland, Slovenia, Taiwan, etc.). It leads aid missions in numerous countries of Africa, Latin America, Asia, and continental Europe. It also creates training centers for judges and prosecutors, designs educational programs, and coordinates customized training courses in foreign countries.

**RELATED FIELDS**
- Business
- Banking
- Trade
- Taxation
- Real estate
- Legal studies
- Public prosecution
- Judges
- Human resources

**SUBFIELDS**
- Bankruptcy administration
- Prison administration
- Lawyer
- Attorney
- The Bar
- Bailiff’s clerk
- Notarial clerk
- Judicial commissioner
- Public auctioneer
- Council of State
- Patent attorney
- Court of cassation
- Taxation
- Prison guard
- District courts
- Office of the clerk of court
- Clerk of court
- Bailiff
- Patent engineer
- Judge
- Sentencing
- Legal advisor
- Tax law
- Lobbyist
- Magistrate
- Magistrature
- Liquidator
- Notary
- Judicial police
- Trial
- Prosecutor
- Legal secretary
- Assistant prosecutor
- Prison monitor
- Court

**BY THE NUMBERS**
- €7.8 billion: the budget of the French judiciary (2013)
- 75,833: number of people employed by the Ministry of Justice (2013)
- 307 civil courts (tribunaux d’instance) and police courts (tribunaux de police)
- 161 superior courts (tribunaux de grande instance)
- 136 business courts (tribunaux de commerce)
- 115 social security courts (tribunaux des affaires de sécurité sociale)
- 42 administrative courts (tribunaux administratifs)
- 36 courts of appeal (courts d’appel)

**USEFUL LINKS**
- Association Française des Juristes d’Entreprise (AFJE): www.afje.org
- Community of legal professionals: www.village-justice.com
- Site for students in the social sciences: http://www.fede-asso.org/les-metiers-du-droit/
- Faculté Libre de Droit, d’Économie et de Gestion (FACO): http://facoparis.com
- Institut de Droit Comparé IDC - Université Panthéon-Assas Paris II: http://idc.u-paris2.fr
- Institut des Hautes Études Internationales IHEI - Université Panthéon-Assas Paris II: www.ihei.fr
PREPARATORY PROGRAM FOR GRANDES ÉCOLES (CPGE)
(SECONDARY DIPLOMA + 2 YEARS OF HIGHER EDUCATION) – L2

The CPGE in economics, law, and management prepares students for the entrance examination required for admission to France’s Grandes Écoles. It takes two years to complete at French secondary schools, but only one year at ENS Rennes.

DIPLÔME D’ÉTUDES UNIVERSITAIRES SCIENTIFIQUES ET TECHNIQUES
(SECONDARY DIPLOMA + 2 YEARS OF HIGHER EDUCATION) – L2

The DUT in legal careers is offered by university-affiliated institutes of technology (IUT). It prepares students for careers as legal secretaries, careers in local government offices, or careers in legal departments of companies (human resources, litigation and conflict management, contract management, etc.).

LICENCE
(SECONDARY DIPLOMA + 3 YEARS OF HIGHER LEARNING) – L3

The licence in law is offered in the broad field of law, economics, and management by 50 institutions.

PROFESSIONAL LICENCE
(SECONDARY DIPLOMA + 3 YEARS OF HIGHER LEARNING) – L2 +1 YEAR

The professional licence in law or legal studies is offered in the broad field of law, economics, and management. Students can choose from 40 specializations.

DIPLOME DE JURISTE-CONSEIL D’ENTREPRISE (DJCE)
(MASTER 1 +1 YEAR OF HIGHER EDUCATION) – M2

The DJCE is open to holders of a Master 1 in law. It is offered by a dozen universities.

DIPLOME SUPÉRIEUR DE NOTARIAT
(MASTER 1 +1 YEAR OF HIGHER EDUCATION) – M2

Holders of the DSN degree are eligible to sit for the national “notaire” or “notaire collaborateur” examination. The diploma itself confers no official professional qualification. The general practitioner of the French legal system, the notaire is a highly qualified lawyer who advises individuals and companies in the areas of family law, estate planning, real estate law, and rural law.

INTERNATIONAL DEGREE PROGRAMS
LICENCE (SECONDARY DIPLOMA + 3 YEARS OF HIGHER EDUCATION) – L3

International programs at the licence level are offered in conjunction with universities in other countries. These programs emphasize comparative law (French, German, Anglo-Saxon, Italian, Russian, Swiss, etc.).

MASTER (SECONDARY DIPLOMA + 5 YEARS OF HIGHER EDUCATION) – M2

The master in law is available in the broad field of law, economics, and management. Students can select from a wide array of specializations:

• comparative law • communications and ICT law
• intellectual property law • health law
• economic law • corporate law
• environmental law • property law
• European Union law • business law
• insurance law • tax law
• law and management • international law
• medical law and health law • notarial law
• private law • public law
• social law • European laws
• Human rights law, etc.

40 master’s degrees in law are taught in English. Multiple specializations are available:
• business law • European and comparative private international law
• information technology law • intellectual property law
• international business lawyer • international economic law and governance
• international and European law • labor law and human resources
• law and business ethics • law and economics
• law and tax management • management and business law
• research in English and American business law • social law, etc.

Catalogue of programs taught in English:

INTERNATIONAL DEGREE PROGRAMS
LICENCE (SECONDARY DIPLOMA + 3 YEARS OF HIGHER EDUCATION) – L3

International programs at the licence level are offered in conjunction with universities in other countries. These programs emphasize comparative law (French, German, Anglo-Saxon, Italian, Russian, Swiss, etc.).

MASTER (SECONDARY DIPLOMA + 5 YEARS OF HIGHER EDUCATION) – M2

These programs focus on multiple areas of comparative and applied law: common law and European law, comparative business law, European labor law, French and foreign legal systems, international and comparative health law, etc.