

LEGAL ENGLISH

**Civil, Commercial,
Administrative and Labour Law
A Handbook**

Aneta Skorupa-Wulczyńska

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WYDANIE ROZSZERZONE



Wolters Kluwer

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Types of laws

1.1. Legal systems

Exercise 1. Division of legal systems

The map below presents legal systems all over the world. On the basis of the map match the names of the systems with their definitions.



Source: www.juriglobe.ca/eng

Name of the system	Definition
1.	This category includes states whose law is based on English common law concepts and legal organisational methods which assign a pre-eminent position to case law. Thus, this category includes states that have close ties with the English tradition and for which common law jurisprudence retains its character as fundamental.
2.	This is an autonomous legal system of a religious nature and predominantly based on the Koran. In a number of countries of the Muslim tradition, it tends to be limited to the laws relating to personal status.
3.	It has drawn its inspiration largely from the Roman law heritage. On the whole, the system gives precedence to written law and opts for a systematic codification of general law. The system has taken on a variety of cultural forms throughout the world. It is also called 'Romano-Germanic' or continental law.
4.	Today, hardly any state in the world fully operates under this legal system. Custom can take on many guises, depending on whether it is rooted in wisdom born of real daily experience or more intellectually based on great spiritual or philosophical traditions. Custom as the legal basis still plays a significant role in some areas, such as matters of personal status. It is of importance in a relatively large number of states with mixed legal systems.
5.	The system is also called 'hybrid' or 'composite'. The category includes states where two or more systems apply cumulatively or interactively, but also states where there is a juxtaposition of systems as a result of more or less clearly defined fields of application.

Exercise 2. Common-law vs. civil-law traditions

Fill in the gaps with the words provided below.

uncodified ◊ investigates ◊ jury ◊ precedent ◊ judgment ◊ legislators ◊ procedural ◊ yearbooks and reports ◊ brings ◊ codified ◊ punishment ◊ adversarial ◊ substantive

Common law is generally (1) This means that there is no comprehensive compilation of legal rules and statutes. While common law does rely on some scattered statutes, it is largely based on (2), meaning the judicial decisions that have already been made in similar cases. These precedents are maintained over time through the records of the courts as well as historically documented in collections of case law known as (3) The precedents to be applied in the decision of each new case are determined by the presiding judge. As a result, judges have an enormous role in shaping American and British law. Common law functions as an (4) system, a contest between two opposing parties before a judge who moderates. A (5) of ordinary

people without legal training decides on the facts of the case. The judge then enters the (6) based on the jury's verdict.

Civil law, also known as continental law, in contrast, is (7) Countries with civil-law systems have comprehensive, continuously updated legal codes that specify all matters capable of being brought before court, the applicable procedure, and the appropriate (8) for each offense. Such codes distinguish between different categories of law: (9) law establishes which acts are subject to criminal or civil prosecution, (10) law establishes how to determine whether a particular action constitutes a criminal offence. In a civil-law system, the judge's role is to establish the facts of the case and to apply the provisions of the applicable code. Though the judge often (11) the formal charges, (12) the matter, and decides on the case, he or she works within a framework established by a comprehensive, codified set of laws. Therefore, the judge's decision is less crucial in shaping civil law than the decisions of (13) and legal scholars who draft and interpret the codes.

Source of the text: <https://www.law.berkeley.edu>

Exercise 3. Civil-law system and common-law system

Match two halves of the sentences and decide if they describe the common-law (CoL) or civil-law (CiL) systems.

- | | | |
|--|-----|--|
| 1. The system was developed in Europe | (a) | are binding upon lower courts. |
| 2. By definition, in England past judicial decisions | (b) | while statutes are only seen as invasion into the legal system, and therefore are interpreted narrowly. |
| 3. The primary source of law | (c) | or draw analogies from statutory provisions to fill gaps. |
| 4. Courts reason extensively on the basis of general principles of law | (d) | and is based on Roman and Napoleonic law. |
| 5. The system is used throughout Europe | (e) | the court is bound to follow the reasoning used in the previous decision (known as <i>ratio decidendi</i>). |
| 6. <i>Stare decisis</i> refers to | (f) | inquisitorial due to the fact that the court, or a part of the court, is actively involved in investigating the facts of the case. |
| 7. This legal system is called | (g) | covered criminal law, criminal procedure, non-criminal law and procedure as well as commercial law. |

8. If a similar dispute has been resolved in the past (h) the principle of binding precedents which must be followed in future cases containing the same material facts.
9. Cases are the primary source of law (i) as well as in Central and South America, with some nations in Africa and Asia which have also adopted codes based on the European civil law.
10. A comprehensive book of law – a code – developed during Napoleon's reign (j) is a code and statutes.

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
CoL/CiL										

Exercise 4. Grammar – prepositions

Complete the sentences with a correct preposition.

1. The civil-law system has drawn its inspiration the Roman law.
2. The common-law system includes states that have close ties the English tradition.
3. Customary law still plays a significant role matters relating personal status.
4. Common law relies some scattered statutes as it is largely based precedent.
5. Common law functions as an adversarial system, a contest between two opposing parties a judge who moderates the hearing.
6. A jury of ordinary people legal training decides the facts of the case.
7. Codes distinguish different categories of law, e.g. substantive and procedural law.
8. definition, under common law past judicial decisions are binding lower courts.
9. Courts reason extensively the basis of general principles of law or draw analogies statutory provisions to fill gaps.
10. A comprehensive book of law – a code – developed Napoleon's reign covered criminal law, criminal procedure, non-criminal law and procedure as well as commercial law.

What do these words mean?

precedent – a decision of the court used as authority for reaching the same decision in subsequent cases.

precedence – a more important position or status than something or someone else's or the right to a more important position or status.

adversarial – also adversary, describing a system of criminal justice in which conclusions as to the liability are reached by the process of prosecution and defence, opp. *inquisitorial*.

inquisitorial – refers to a system of criminal justice in which the truth is revealed by an inquiry into the facts conducted by the judge.

1.2. Classifications of law

This section shows various ways in which law can be classified. Such an approach gives a bird's-eye view of the wide range of matters that are dealt with by laws. The differences between the law classifications arise because of the differing focuses adopted.

Exercise 1. Classification by scope or application

This classification divides the laws according to the extent of the geographical or political area to which they apply. Match the names of laws with their definitions.

International law	a. a part of the national law of a country that establishes rules for dealing with cases involving a foreign element
Public international law	b. a general name used to describe the set of rules operating at an international level
Private international law	c. the law that operates only within a certain limited area or locality within a country, such as a sub-district, shire, municipality, city, or town
National law	d. the law regulating relationships between sovereign states and their rights and obligations with regard to one another
Local law	e. also called domestic law, is the law that operates on a territory of one state

Exercise 2. Classification by subject matter

A common way of classifying laws is based on their subject matter. Read the texts below and put the words in a correct form.

The main categories of law include contract law, law of delicts (tort law), property law, family law, business or commercial law, criminal law, constitutional law, administrative law and revenue law.

Contract law

Contracts are agreements made between people or bodies who have legal capacity to do so. Such agreements are enforced by the courts if they are intended to be (1) (bind), are not (2) (legal) or contrary to public policy; and are not based upon some fundamental mistake made by both parties or caused by one of the parties.

Law of delicts (torts)

Delicts are civil (3) (wrong) that are committed when one person causes injury, damage or loss to another person in circumstances that the courts consider should render them liable to pay damages to compensate for the harm they have caused. It is hard to express any general statement as to when the courts will consider a person liable to pay damages but some of the main instances are when a person has acted without reasonable care, i.e. (4) (negligence), has caused an unreasonable (5) (interfere) in the rights of neighbours or the rights of the public (nuisance), has failed to keep control of dangerous things, or animals known to be dangerous, that he has on his property (trespass); or has (6) (impair) the reputation of another person by making (7) (truth) statements about him, which is called (8) (fame). Under some jurisdictions, some torts are also criminal offences and are (9) (punish) by the state, as well as give rise to liability to pay damages to the individual (10) (suffer) injury.

Property law

Property is usually divided into two types:

- real property, which is (11) (move) property such as land and buildings erected on land; and
- personal property, which is movable property such as animals, vehicles or money.

The rules concerning (12) (own), use and transfer of property differ according to the particular type of property.

Family law

Family law is concerned with the law relating to births, deaths and (13) (bury), marriages, (14) (nullify) of marriage, divorce or dissolution of marriage, the custody of children born out of a marriage, and the rights to joint marriage property.

Podręcznik będzie stanowić idealne narzędzie do doskonalenia praktycznej znajomości języka angielskiego prawniczego, w szczególności w obszarach prawa cywilnego, handlowego, administracyjnego i pracy. Zakresem tematycznym obejmuje także wprowadzenie do prawa polskiego.

Książka zawiera uporządkowaną prezentację terminologii dotyczącej tych dziedzin prawa i zestaw ćwiczeń ułożonych według poszczególnych zagadnień. Glosariusze na końcu każdego rozdziału ułatwiają poruszanie się w ramach omawianych pojęć, zaś zamieszczone na końcu książki słowniczki polsko-angielski i angielsko-polski służą szybkiemu odnalezieniu interesującego terminu.

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Aneta Skorupa-Wulczyńska – doktor nauk społecznych w dyscyplinie nauk prawnych, tłumacz przysięgły języka angielskiego z wieloletnim doświadczeniem w nauczaniu języka angielskiego prawniczego oraz tłumaczeniu tekstów prawnych i prawniczych, właścicielka biura szkoleń i tłumaczeń specjalistycznych Lingualex.



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