

# The Courts of Law in the Federal Republik of Germany<sup>1)</sup>

FEDERAL CONSTITUTIONAL COURT  
2 Panels (8 judges each)

Constitutional Courts of the States

Joint Panel of the highest Federal courts<sup>2)</sup>

Federal Court of Justice

Federal Patents Court

Higher Regional Court

Regional Court

Local Court

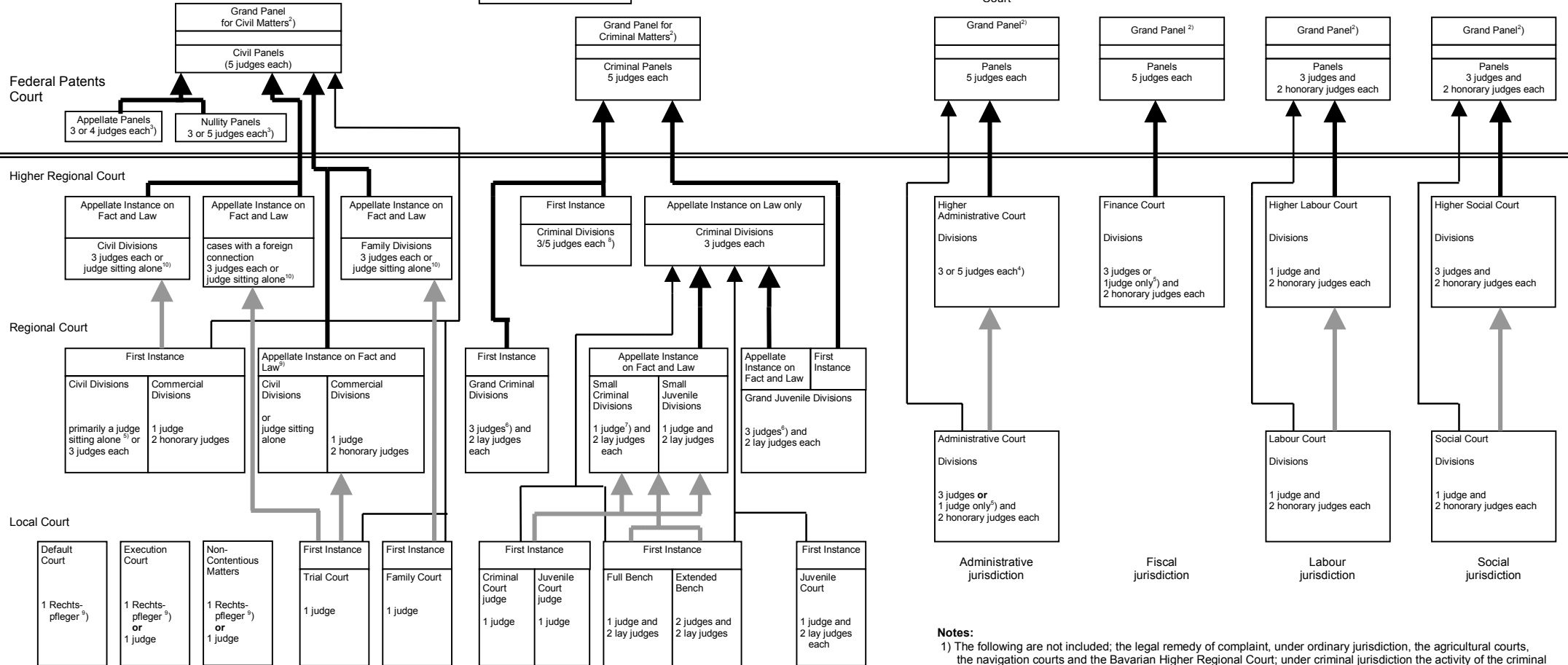
United Grand Panels<sup>5)</sup>

Federal Administrative Court

Federal Finance Court

Federal Labour Court

Federal Social Court



Civil jurisdiction

Criminal jurisdiction

Ordinary jurisdiction

**Legend:**

The arrows indicate the following legal remedies:

- appeal on fact and law
- appeal or complaint on points of law only
- immediate appeal on law only in lieu

of an appeal on fact and law

The composition of the criminal courts as stated applies only to the main court hearing.

**Notes:**

- 1) The following are not included; the legal remedy of complaint, under ordinary jurisdiction, the agricultural courts, the navigation courts and the Bavarian Higher Regional Court; under criminal jurisdiction the activity of the criminal divisions with jurisdiction over execution of sentences.
- 2) Decides only in exceptional cases; composition will depend on the relevant number of Panels.
- 3) Composition is governed by jurisdiction (lawyers and technical experts).
- 4) Composition – in some of the states with 2 honorary judges as well – is regulated by State law.
- 5) Decision given principally by a judge sitting alone; exceptions in Sections 348, 348a Civil Procedure Code.
- 6) Until 31.12.2002 decisions will be rendered in certain cases by only two professional judges and lay judges.
- 7) In cases of an appeal on fact and law against judgment by the extended bench a second professional judge must be brought in.
- 8) Composition depends on the scale and complexity of the case.
- 9) Land legislation may stipulate that the HRC shall have jurisdiction over all appeals on fact and law and over complaints filed in respect of Local Court decisions.
- 10) Judge sitting alone in cases that are simple in legal and factual terms and not of fundamental importance, if the contested decision was given by a judge sitting alone and there has not already been a trial on the merits.