



# France: Summary of Legislative Process

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FRANCE  
SUMMARY OF LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

**Initiative**

Members of the National Assembly, Senators, and the government through the Prime Minister are entitled to initiate legislation. Government bills are called "*projets de loi*", while private bills (bills introduced by the Members of either Chamber) are called "*propositions de lois*." All bills introduced are registered, printed, distributed, and given a number, then sent to a committee.

**Consideration in Committee**

Private bills are sent for consideration to one of the six standing committees of the National Assembly or of the Senate, depending on which chamber first initiated the bill, or, more rarely to a special committee. Government bills will be sent to either a Senate or a National Assembly committee depending upon a combination of reasons including workload and the political attitude of a chamber towards the bill. However, the government must always present first all finance bills to the National Assembly. The competent committee appoints a "*rapporteur*" to study the bill and to explain it to other members. The committee may conduct hearings after which it adopts a written report and amendments to the initial draft.

**Consideration on the Floor of the National Assembly or Senate**

Each government or private bill is discussed in turn by each chamber with a view to reaching an agreement on the text. Private bills are naturally first discussed by the chamber which initiated it. Government bills may be discussed first by the Senate or the National Assembly with the exception, as stated above of finance bills, which always go to the National Assembly first.

**Final Text of the Bill**

Before it becomes final, a bill must be passed in identical terms by both chambers. The successive consideration by the two chambers is called the "*navette*" (shuttle). It may continue for a long time unless the government decides to interrupt the process and send the bill to a joint committee. If the joint committee fails to agree on the text or if the committee's text is not passed in both chambers in identical terms, the National Assembly will make a final decision at the request of the government after a further reading in each chamber.

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