

The French Constitution of 1791 – the realisation of the dreams of 1789?

The King is the head of the **executive branch**.

- He appoints the ministers.
- He commands the administration
- He commands the army.
- He can veto the laws of the National Assembly
- He is controlled by the National Assembly.

The National Assembly is the **legislative branch**.

- It passes the laws.
- It appoints the judges of the High Court.
- It controls the lower courts.
- It controls the king.
- Its members are elected by the electors. Every two years.

The High Court, the Court of Appeal and the lower courts are the **judicial branch**.

- They pronounce judgements / deliver verdicts.

→ *The working of the constitution depends on the cooperation (working together) of the King and the National Assembly.*

→ The changes in 1789-1792:

- abolition of feudal rights
- Declaration of the Rights of Man
- introduction of a constitution in 1791 (→ constitutional monarchy)
- centralization of the administration (→ 83 departments)
- church lands sold by the State
- clergy had to swear oaths of loyalty to the constitution

Winners	People who lost out
<p>the affluent citizens of the Third Estate (such as business people and wealthy farmers): got political rights and power as active citizens; they bought church property</p>	<p>the King: he had to share power with the National Assembly</p> <p>→ <i>He unsuccessfully tried to flee to royalist nobles and their army across the eastern border.</i></p>
<p>peasants / workers: became free (but only passive) citizens (→ Many peasants did not profit much from the selling of church lands.)</p>	<p>the nobles: lost their political influence and their titles (→ many went into exile)</p>
	<p>the clergy: they were torn between their loyalty to the Pope and the King and to the constitution</p>
<p>→ <i>The main winners were the rich people in the towns who often supported republican ideas.</i></p>	



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