

France bars surrogate twins' citizenship

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PARIS — Ten-year-old twins born to a surrogate mother in the United States are not French citizens, France's top court said in a ruling that affirmed the nation's ban on surrogacy.

A California county's ruling that a French couple are legally the twins' parents went too far, the decision said.

The ruling illustrates the legal limbo some would-be parents find themselves in. The United States and some other countries recognize surrogacy, though France does not; countries such as Belgium are largely silent on the subject.

Because Sylvie Mennesson was unable to bear children, she and her husband, Dominique Mennesson, turned to a surrogate mother with his sperm and a donor's egg. The surrogate mother gave birth to the twin girls in California in 2000; they have US citizenship.

A lower court had stripped the twins from France's civil registry. Being listed on it is a requirement for obtaining identity cards and passports.

The court said nothing prevents the twins from living with the Mennessons in France.
