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EU judicial training policy

European judicial training is important for all legal practitioners, with priority for judges and prosecutors, in order for them to become competent in the implementation of the European legislative framework. Trust and understanding between legal practitioners will ensure the rights of individuals and companies are upheld in a clear and consistent manner.

European judicial training is essential for all legal practitioners, such as court staff, lawyers, solicitors, bailiffs, notaries and mediators and, particularly, judges and prosecutors.

Working together to improve European judicial training

In light of the new responsibilities devolved to the European Union by the Treaty of Lisbon and in order to implement the priorities established by the Stockholm Programme in the field of European judicial training, the European Commission published a

[Communication on "Building trust in EU-wide justice, a new dimension to European judicial training" in September 2011](#). The aim of this communication was to give a new dimension to European judicial training and to enable an even greater number of legal practitioners to access high-quality training in European Union law.

Three quarter of the responding judges and prosecutors were of the opinion that the number of cases involving EU law had increased over the years. It has therefore become necessary to improve and extend the training offered at EU level. Almost half of the responding judges and prosecutors deal with issues of EU law at least once every three months. As a consequence, 65% of judges and prosecutors consider the knowledge of EU law and its implementation as relevant for their functions (*results of a survey of individual judges, prosecutors and court staff in the EU Member States on their experiences of judicial training: European Parliament study "Judicial training in the EU Member States", 2011*).

The Commission has set the objective of **enabling 700 000 legal practitioners**, half of the legal practitioners in the European Union, to participate in **European judicial training activities by 2020** through the use of available resources at **local, national and European level**, in line with the objectives of the [Stockholm Programme](#).

Achieving this objective is the **joint responsibility of all stakeholders**. Member States, Councils for the judiciary, [national](#) and [European judicial training bodies](#), and legal professions at national and European level must be **committed** to integrating EU law and its implementation into national and local training and to increasing the number of training activities in EU law and the number of participants attending such sessions.

Taking action

The Commission **calls on Member States and the legal professions** to ensure that **legal practitioners benefit from at least one week's training in the EU acquis and legal instruments in the course of their career**.

The Commission is **committed to increasing the funding available** for European judicial training in order to support **high-quality projects** with greater European impact. The purpose of the projects will be to train legal practitioners in EU law, including the development of e-learning. Under the new 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework, European judicial training has been made a priority with a view to supporting the training of more than **20 000 legal practitioners per year by 2020**.

Information about **EU financial support** for European judicial training projects can be found on the websites of the [Directorate General for Justice and Consumers](#), the [Directorate General for Competition](#), the [Directorate General Migration and Home Affairs](#) and the [European Anti-Fraud Office \(OLAF\)](#).

Since 2013, the Commission has been supporting AIAKOS, a **two-week exchange programme for new judges and prosecutors managed by the European Judicial training Network (EJTN)**. It will also develop complementary measures, by promoting the supporting role of the [European e-Justice Portal](#) and drafting **practical guidelines**, e.g. on training methodologies and evaluation processes.

The Commission also encourages **public-private partnerships** as a way of developing innovative training solutions. In particular, these can help to expand European judicial training in terms of numbers of activities on offer and the number of participants able to benefit.

The Commission has developed training modules on the implementation of specific European legislative instruments. These are available free of charge and can be adapted to national contexts and different target groups by trainers running specialised training courses. They can be found in the ["training material"](#) section of the Portal.

Assessing the current situation

The Commission publishes a yearly report in English on the participation of legal practitioners in training in EU law in the European Union:

2018 report [PDF](#) (2588 KB) [en](#)

2017 report [PDF](#) (3019 Kb) [en](#)

2016 report [PDF](#) (1515 KB) [en](#)

2015 report [PDF](#) (1742 Kb) [en](#)

2014 report [PDF](#) (1895 Kb) [en](#)

2012 report [PDF](#) (2265 Kb) [en](#), published in 2013,

2011 report [PDF](#) (512 Kb) [en](#), published in 2012,

In 2013-2014, the Commission carried out the **pilot project on European judicial training** proposed by the European Parliament to identify best practices in training legal practitioners in EU law. The results are published here:

Study on best practices in training of judges and prosecutors, assigned to the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN):

The report is available in [English](#) [PDF](#) (1619 Kb) [en](#). The executive summary is available in [English](#) [PDF](#) (593 Kb) [en](#) and [French](#) [PDF](#) (589 Kb) [fr](#).

The factsheets on good training practices are available in the ["good practices"](#) section of the Portal. They will help trainers and training providers of all legal professions improve their practice on issues such as training needs assessment, training methodology or evaluation.

Study on the state of play of lawyers' training in EU law, assigned to the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) and the EIPA European Centre for Judges and Lawyers:

The report is available in an [interactive magazine](#) [PDF](#) (2857 Kb) [en](#) and in [pdf format](#) [PDF](#) (1807 Kb) [en](#) in English. The executive summary is available in

English [PDF](#) (1064 Kb) [en](#) and in French [PDF](#) (1378 Kb) [fr](#).

The factsheets on lawyers' training systems in all EU Member States are presented in the Portal section on training of legal practitioners at national level. They can help national bar associations and lawyers' authorities assess the training background of any applicant lawyers wishing to exercise his/her right to freedom of establishment in the EU.

Some annexes to the report are available here in English such as [annex B - results from the consultation](#) [PDF](#) (2140 Kb) [en](#) and annex H: [questionnaire 1 on training systems](#) [PDF](#) (164 Kb) [en](#) and its [explanations](#) [PDF](#) (163 Kb) [en](#), [questionnaire 2 on training providers](#) [PDF](#) (286 Kb) [en](#) and its [explanations](#) [PDF](#) (234 Kb) [en](#) and [questionnaire 3 on good training practices](#) [PDF](#) (190 Kb) [en](#) and its [explanations](#) [PDF](#) (62 Kb) [en](#).

The website of the project is accessible [here](#).

Study on the state of play of court staff training in EU law and promotion of cooperation between court staff training providers at EU level, assigned to a consortium of the EIPA European Centre for Judges and Lawyers, Justice Coopération Internationale (JCI, France), the Scottish Court Services (United Kingdom), the Centro de Estudios Jurídicos (Spain), the Krajowa Szkoła Sądownictwa i Prokuratury (Poland) and Saxony's Staatsministerium der Justiz und für Europa (Germany):

The study is available in English [PDF](#) (1379 Kb) [en](#). The executive summary is available in English [PDF](#) (909 Kb) [en](#) and French [PDF](#) (893 Kb) [fr](#). The study's recommendations to improve court staff training are also available in English [PDF](#) (938 Kb) [en](#) and French [PDF](#) (950 Kb) [fr](#).

A summary of EU court staff's main tasks and roles can be found in [this table](#) [PDF](#) (383 Kb) [en](#). The detailed description of the court staff's tasks in each Member State will be published soon on the Member States' pages of the Portal.

The description of the court staff's training systems in the Member States will be published in the section "Training of legal practitioners at national level" of the Portal.

Project to promote the cooperation between judicial stakeholders concerned by European judicial training, assigned to the EJTN:

The report is available in English [PDF](#) (1499 Kb) [en](#). The executive summary is available in English [PDF](#) (631 Kb) [en](#) and French [PDF](#) (630 Kb) [fr](#).

The factsheets on the role of the EU-level judicial networks in training are available in the "European training networks and structures" section of the Portal.

Context

In 2006, the European Commission presented a [communication](#) to the European Parliament and the Council on judicial training in the European Union. 2008 saw the adoption of a [Resolution](#) of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the training of judges, prosecutors and judicial staff in the European Union.

In 2009, the European Parliament published a [study on strengthening judicial training in the European Union](#) [PDF](#) (553 Kb) [fr](#), in French.

The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009 provided a legal basis for activities relating to European judicial training. Articles 81 and 82 list 'support for the training of the judiciary and judicial staff' among the measures required to strengthen judicial cooperation in civil, commercial and criminal matters.

In December 2009 the Council adopted the [Stockholm Programme](#) focusing on the issue of European judicial training for all legal professionals.

In the Stockholm Programme [Action Plan](#) and the 2010 EU citizenship [report](#) the Commission declared European judicial training to be a priority. The European Parliament has also consistently underlined that proper judicial training contributes significantly to improving the operation of the internal market and making it easier for citizens to exercise their [rights](#).

At the end of 2010, the Commission launched a consultation among stakeholders including Member States, members of the Justice Forum, and [European training networks and structures](#) and their members. A summary of the findings of the consultation can be found [here](#) [PDF](#) (192 Kb) [en](#).

On 13 September 2011, the European Commission agreed the Communication "

[Building trust in EU-wide Justice, a new dimension to European judicial training](#)".

In its conclusions of 27 and 28 of October 2011 on European judicial training ([available in English](#)), the Justice and Home Affairs Council encouraged the yearly sharing of information with the Commission on available training in EU law and the number of practitioners trained, and asked the Commission to consider presenting an annual report on European judicial training.

In 2012, the European Parliament proposed a pilot project on European judicial training, with a view to contributing to:

identifying best practices in training of judges, prosecutors and justice professionals on national legal systems and traditions as well as on Union law, identifying the most effective ways of delivering training in EU law and national legal systems to judges, prosecutors and justice professionals at local level and promoting the dialogue and coordination between EU judges and prosecutors,

encouraging EU judicial training providers to share ideas on best practice and disseminate them across the EU, and

improving cooperation between the EJTN and national judicial training institutions. This will involve training providers such as the Academy of European Law, and the European-level professional organisations such as the European Network of the Councils for the Judiciary, the Network of the Presidents of the Supreme Judicial Courts, the Association of the Councils of State and Supreme Administrative Jurisdictions and the Network of the General Prosecutors of the Supreme Judicial Courts of the EU.

In November 2013, Vice-President Reding delivered a speech in English at the European Parliament's workshop on "[Legal training: an essential tool for European judicial excellence](#)".

In June 2016, the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN) adopted nine judicial training principles, both as a foundation for the judiciary to manage their training needs and as a framework for the training providers to plan and deliver training for judges and prosecutors. The principles address issues such as a right to judicial training during working time, a responsibility for providing the necessary resources, compulsory initial training at the beginning of the career, use of modern training methods and inclusion of techniques and non-legal issues among the training topics. The text of the principles and background information can be found here in [English](#) and in [French](#).

Related studies

[Strengthening judicial cooperation in the European Union](#) [PDF](#) (1694 Kb) [fr](#), 2009, in French

[Judicial training in the EU Member States](#), 2011, in English

European Parliament workshop on "the training of legal practitioners: teaching EU law and judgcraft":

[Session I – Learning and Accessing EU Law: Some Best Practices](#) and [Session II – Improving Mutual Trust](#) (in English), 2013.

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