

Questions & Answers on the new European judicial training strategy 2021-2024

On 2nd December 2020, the European Commission adopted the package to modernise EU justice by boosting training of justice professionals. The Commission set out ambitious targets in its [European Judicial Training Strategy 2021-2024](#), launched a new [European Training Platform](#) and published [European judicial training 2020 annual report](#).

"Fair and efficient justice depends on justice professionals whose knowledge, skills and tools are suited to face major 21st century challenges, such as the growing use of artificial intelligence for predictive justice or the urgent need to favour digital over paper. I trust that the package we adopted today will help to promote a common European judicial culture, based on the rule of law, fundamental rights and mutual trust. Efficient serving of justice across the EU will benefit our end users - companies and citizens." (Didier Reynders, Commissioner for Justice)

"Any new legislation is only as good as its implementation" (Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission).

"The Commission will also step up efforts to improve the effective application, implementation and enforcement of EU law" (European Commission Work programme 2021, 19 October 2020, COM (2020) 690 final).

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Why do we need a European judicial training strategy?

The new European judicial training strategy builds on the achievements of the Commission strategy adopted in 2011 '[Building trust in EU-wide justice - a new dimension to judicial training](#)', which expired in 2020. It brought about a step change, in terms of both approach and scale, in the organisation of judicial training in the EU. Whereas the majority of EU judges and prosecutors responding to a 2010 survey had never participated in judicial training on EU or another Member State's law, since the adoption of the Communication more than half of all EU justice professionals have done so: close to 1.2 million. The [2019 evaluation of that strategy](#) shows that it has achieved most of its objectives. The flagship target of training half (i.e. 800 000) of all justice professionals on EU law between 2011 and 2020 was reached ahead of schedule in 2017. It is now essential that judicial training remains high on the EU agenda, builds on the lessons learnt and is further strengthened.

What are the key novelties in the strategy?

The EU is facing a number of new developments and challenges that need to be addressed by judicial training, including a deterioration of the rule of law and attacks on fundamental rights in some Member States, the exponential digitalisation of our societies and the prospects of EU membership for the Western Balkans. Moreover, the level of participation in training must be elevated and balanced as it still differs considerably across Member States and among justice professions. More professions must be addressed. European judicial training should go beyond legal education and support the development of professional skills.

What are the key pillars of this Strategy?

The EU Strategy on European judicial training is based on a four-strand approach:

- (1) training substance addressing broad areas of EU law, providing a flexible response to emerging and continuous EU law training needs;
- (2) training audience addressing broad range of justice professionals enlarging geographical coverage and aiming to boost judicial training for young practitioners;
- (3) training methodology promoting high quality, effective training activities, using modern training methods benefiting from digitalisation;
- (4) sharing responsibility for judicial training between Member States, training providers, national and European justice professions' organisations, and the EU.

What are the training needs in EU law of justice professionals in the EU?

Judicial training should promote a common rule of law culture, upholding fundamental rights, upscaling the digitalisation of justice. It should help professionals to keep pace with developing EU law. This applies to the key EU instruments for cross-border judicial cooperation and the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO). Further, combating terrorism, organised crime, preventing and countering radicalisation leading to violent extremism and fighting money laundering remain key training topics. Training should assist in protecting the rights of victims, including of gender-based

violence, the rights of children and of people with disabilities. Training is also needed in particular on consumer rights, single market rules, EU company law, EU competition law and EU environmental legislation.

How does digitalisation impact the European judicial training?

Judicial training must upscale the digitalisation of justice preparing justice professionals to embrace digitalisation and the use of artificial intelligence. Justice practitioners need to be aware of the impact that digital tools and technologies have on handled cases and be ready to use them properly in daily practice, including in cross-border proceedings. They need to secure adequate protection of individuals' rights and personal data in the digital space, in particular so that parties can access files and attend court hearings. Training methodology should make better use of new technologies.

Who is targeted by the strategy?

The strategy targets all justice professionals who apply EU law, primarily judges, prosecutors and court staff, but also professions such as lawyers, notaries, bailiffs, mediators, legal interpreters/translators, court experts, and in certain situations to prison staff and probation officers.

What are the key qualitative objectives of the strategy?

- European acquis on the rule of law and fundamental rights should be systematically available in the continuous training offer that judges and other justice professionals can attend as well as should be standard components of the initial judicial training.
- To embed "judgecraft", non-legal knowledge and skills in the national continuous training programmes.
- Every future or newly appointed judge and prosecutor should take part in a cross-border exchange during the initial training.
- Training providers to follow more closely the recommendations in the [Advice for training providers](#) and the [EJTN Handbook on judicial training methodology in Europe](#).
- Cross-border training activities to be organised every year for at least 5% of all judges and prosecutors; new participants encouraged to attend.
- Training providers offer interactive, practical and accessible to all learners e-learning that is precisely tailored to training objectives.
- The potential of modern techniques such as virtual face-to-face training and extended reality solutions is further explored.
- Capsule' e-training (short, up to date, tightly focused) will be more used to address justice professionals' immediate needs in the context of a concrete case.
- Trainers are trained in exploiting the full potential of e learning methodologies.
- Every training activity is evaluated on the basis of participants' satisfaction, increased competence and, where relevant, impact on their performance.

What are the key quantitative objectives of the strategy?

Overall it is necessary that a greater number of justice professionals attend training on EU law, and that training providers enhance their training offers on EU law, whether national or cross-border, and whether EU (co-)funded or not. The new strategy foresees a more tailored approach setting new, ambitious, albeit differentiated, objectives for the

professions in focus, adapted both to their training needs and their level of attendance at EU law training.

The objective is to train yearly, by 2024, in continuous training on EU law:

- 65% of judges and prosecutors;
- 15% of the court and prosecution offices' staff who need EU law competence;
- 15% of lawyers;
- 30% of notaries;
- 20% of bailiffs.

Who are the key European actors in judicial training?

The [European Judicial Training Network \(EJTN\)](#) is best placed to coordinate, through its members national judicial training providers, training activities on EU law and to develop cross-border training for judges and prosecutors, including exchanges. The [Academy of European Law \(ERA\)](#) is the leading EU-level training provider on EU law topics not only for justice professionals. The [European Institute of Public Administration \(EIPA-Luxembourg\)](#) help to consolidate knowledge on EU law. The role of networks of justice professionals, such as the [Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe \(CCBE\)](#) for lawyers, [Notaries of Europe \(CNUJ\)](#) for notaries and the [European Union of Judicial Officers \(UEHJ\)](#), is crucial to implement this strategy, by ensuring that created materials are taken up and re-used among their members, promoting the national rollout of training activities and facilitating the exchange of experience between training providers from different Member States.

Will the strategy reach beyond the EU?

European judicial training focuses on EU justice professionals. The Commission also encourages the participation of justice professionals from the Western Balkans region in cross border judicial training. EU support in the region aims at ensuring coherence and sustainability, and addressing challenges based on a sound training needs assessment and a problem-oriented approach. Further synergies could be sought with EU-funded judicial training initiatives in other non-EU countries, in particular in Africa and Latin America, as a contribution to strengthening democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

How does this Strategy fit in with other EU strategies?

The European judicial training is an overarching issue, essential for the proper implementation of EU law by justice professionals, which serves the objectives of other strategies recently adopted by the Commission like the [strategy to reinforce the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the EU](#), the [strategy on the digitalisation of justice in the EU](#) and [the strategy on victims' rights](#).

How will the Commission monitor that this Strategy is implemented?

The Commission will continue to report on progress on EU law training for justice professionals. It will reflect with stakeholders on how to improve data collection and analysis. The Commissions will encourage using, where relevant, a common evaluation form in EU supported activities.

What is the European Training Platform?

[The European Training Platform](#) is a search tool at the service of justice professionals who want to train themselves on EU law. It advertises training courses on EU law and training materials for self-learning and use by trainers.

What will be the added benefit of the new European Training Platform and who will manage it?

The European Training Platform is a freely and easily accessible one-stop-shop for judicial training opportunities information and training materials until now scattered all over the internet. The ETP will be essential to secure sustainability and dissemination of the results of EU-(co)funded projects. The European Commission contributes to the platform with ready-to-use training materials or handbooks produced notably thanks to EU financial support. On 2nd December, a first test phase is launched with the participation of four recognised EU-level judicial training providers: the [European Judicial Training Network \(EJTN\)](#), the [Academy of European Law \(ERA\)](#), the [European Institute of Public Administration \(EIPA\)](#) and the [European University Institute \(EUI\)](#), which inform potential trainees about the training activities they organise all over the EU, in different languages.

What is the European judicial training 2020 annual report?

The [European judicial training 2020 annual report](#) of DG Justice and Consumers presents annually the progress in EU law judicial training in all EU MS. It is the tool to monitor the implementation and achievements of the objectives of the current strategy.

What are the key figures of the 2020 European judicial training report?

In 2019 more than 180 000 justice professionals – 12.9% of all justice professionals – received training on EU law or on the law of another Member State. The EU (co-)funded training for more than 42 000 participants in 2019 – 23.14% of all the justice professionals who received training on EU law or on the law of another Member State – 2.98% of all justice professionals in the EU.