

Annual Report



THE COUNCIL OF BARS AND LAW SOCIETIES OF EUROPE

The voice of European lawyers

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PIERRE-DOMINIQUE SCHUPP

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PRESIDENCY

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> CCBE President Pierre-Dominique Schupp



PIERRE-DOMINIQUE SCHUPP

Foreword of the President

The year 2024, which has just ended, has enabled the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe to keep strengthening its leading position in defending the protection of lawyers and, in so doing, of the rule of law in Europe and beyond.

This was demonstrated in particular by the drafting and distribution of the Manifesto for the European elections in June 2024.

This document, intended primarily, but not exclusively, for future parliamentarians, contains the basis for the CCBE's action and commitment to justice, fundamental rights and, in short, the rule of law.

It is, indeed, essential to promote an efficient and fair judicial system in Europe, to be able to guarantee accessible justice for all and respect for the rule of law in all circumstances.

However, the financial resources allocated to justice are often not commensurate with its needs and expectations, which seriously calls into question the proper functioning of democracy, of which justice is a major component.

Lawyers play a fundamental role in this respect, one that is recognised, but should be acknowledged even more.

In this regard, 2024 is a milestone for the CCBE, as the Council of Europe has completed its work on a European Convention on the protection of the profession of lawyers. This will be the first binding instrument to clearly define the rights and obligations of lawyers. The Convention will be open for signature in the course of 2025 and, in an exceptional move, may be adopted by non-European states, making it a Convention with a global vocation. The CCBE is particularly pleased with this, having worked for almost ten years to bring this project to fruition.

> CCBE President, Pierre-Dominique Schupp, in the European Parliament for the CCBE Plenary event.



“

During the past year, the CCBE intensified its reflections on our own organisation in order to make it even stronger and, above all, capable of responding to the ever-increasing demands placed on it, which are, in a way, the price of its success.

”

In addition, the CCBE continued its many activities, including the presentation of the annual Human Rights Award to the Legal Clinic of the Panzi Foundation, which provides essential support and legal advice to victims of sexual violence used as a weapon of war in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

During the past year, the CCBE intensified its reflections on our own organisation in order to make it even stronger and, above all, capable of responding to the ever-increasing demands placed on it, which are, in a way, the price of its success.

This success is due first and foremost to the hard work of the entire team at the CCBE in Brussels, from the Legal Advisors to the Administrative Staff, under the leadership of the Secretary-General, Simone Cuomo.

Without the work of the 24 committees/working groups and their respective Chairs, as well as the 600 or so experts who contribute to our expertise, the CCBE would not be able to meet its obligations. I would like to thank them all very much.

Finally, I would like to express my deep gratitude to the members of the CCBE Presidency, Thierry Wickers, Roman Završek, and Alex Tallon. They never stopped supporting me, even in my many whims.

I have no doubt that this Presidency team, now strengthened by Imbi Jürgen, will be able to take the CCBE even further in 2025.

I wish them and the CCBE every success.

PIERRE-DOMINIQUE SCHUPP

CCBE Membership in 2024

- Full members
- Affiliate members
- Associate members
- Observer members
- Suspended members

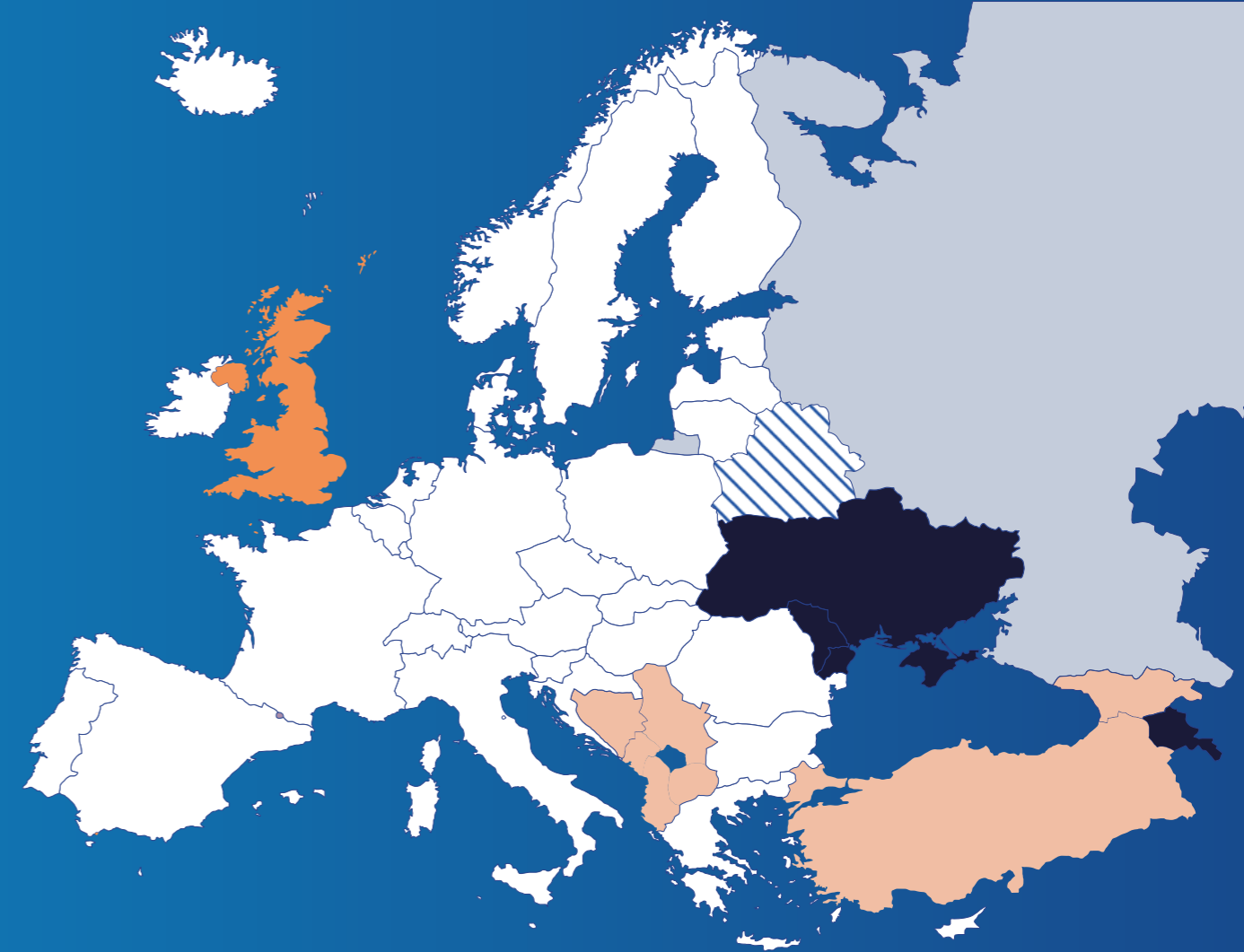
FULL MEMBERS

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

OBSERVER MEMBERS

* Russian Federal Bar Association – Observer membership suspended



Bars and Law Societies from 46 European countries

31 — 1 — 9 — 5

Full members Affiliate member Associate members Observer members

The CCBE in figures



+1 Million
European lawyers

The CCBE is recognised as the voice of the European legal profession, representing more than one million European lawyers through its members.

58



Bars & Law
Societies

The CCBE represents European Bars and Law Societies in their common interests before European and other international institutions.



46

Countries

31 full members
1 affiliate member
9 associate members
5 observer members



35

Positions
& publications

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consultations

4 Open letters

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behaviour and aggression
towards lawyer

1 CCBE-ELF Lawyers' training
curriculum in EU Law

1 Contribution for the 2024
Rule of Law Report

5

Plenary Sessions &
Standing Committees



1

High-level event in the
European Parliament



22 November
2024



10 speakers



150 national
delegation
representatives



650 online
participants



71

Committee &
working group
meetings

91

Participations
in external
events and
meetings

Including events
organised at European
or international level,
such as meetings with
key actors at EU level
and other leading
institutions like the
Council of Europe.



The CCBE in figures



22/01/2024: Online press conference focused on the situation of lawyers in Iran for the 14th Day of the Endangered Lawyer

26/02/2024 and 29/05/2024: Online joint webinar with the European Lawyers Foundation (ELF) on anti-money laundering for lawyers

18/03/2024: Online joint webinar with ELF on intellectual property enforcement: what lawyers need to know

20/03/2024: Annual meeting between the CCBE and the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)

29/05/2024: Online Training Committee meeting and webinar on the questionnaire for the European Judicial Training Report

24/06/2024: Online joint webinar with ELF on the unified patent court: one year on

07/11/2024: Online joint webinar with ELF on corporate sustainability due diligence directive and ESG

18/11/2024: Online joint webinar with ELF on the impact of artificial intelligence on European lawyers' practices

02/12/2024: Online joint webinar with ELF on the Preliminary reference procedures before the Court of Justice of the EU

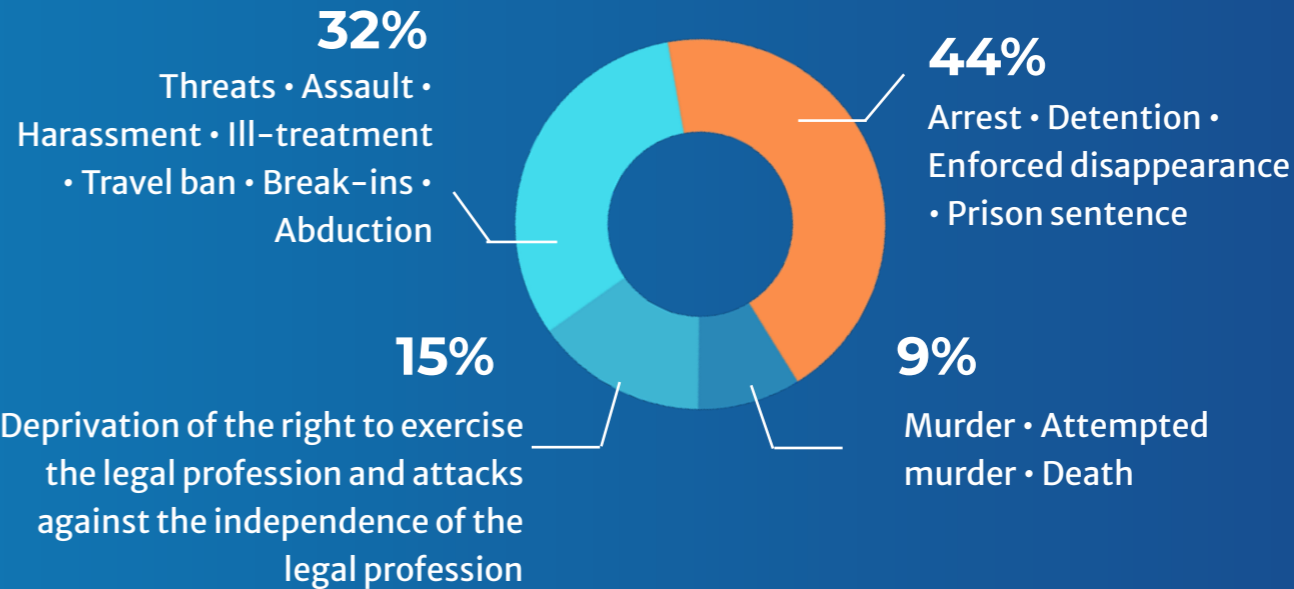
63

Letters in support of endangered lawyers

sent to **34** countries around the world



Type of attacks



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024

Maintaining justice, the rule of law, and fundamental rights at the heart of the European Parliament elections and in advance of the new European Commission

In preparation for the 2024 European Parliament elections and the next European Commission, the CCBE launched its Manifesto, calling on EU institutions to uphold a fair and effective judicial system that champions justice, fundamental rights, and the rule of law.

- The Manifesto urged EU policymakers to prioritise five key points:
- 1. a Europe that defends the rule of law, fundamental rights, and democracy, as well as safeguards the role of an independent legal profession in upholding these values;
 - 2. the need to ensure that the EU legislative process is guided by standards that have a positive impact on the administration of justice;
 - 3. adequate resources for the judicial system and an effective and well-resourced legal aid system;
 - 4. comprehensive training for legal professionals;
 - 5. proper implementation of procedural safeguards in criminal matters.



Read the CCBE Manifesto [here](#).



Available in [English](#) | [French](#) | [Italian](#) | [Portuguese](#)



CCBE Plenary event

In connection with the Manifesto, the CCBE organised a high-profile Plenary event at the European Parliament on 22 November 2024, regarding "Maintaining justice in a changing Europe". The event featured two roundtable discussions focusing on justice as critical infrastructure and the shared responsibility to defend democracy. Distinguished speakers from various European institutions participated, including Javier Zarzalejos, Věra Jourová, Clare Ovey, Ana Gallego Torres, Róbert Répássy, Marc van der Woude, Sirpa Rautio, Ioannis Ktistakis, and Maria Ejchart.

The event attracted over 150 CCBE national delegation representatives and more than 650 online participants, fostering an

insightful exchange of ideas on upholding democratic standards, the rule of law, and fundamental rights.

Missed the CCBE Plenary event?
Watch the summary of the event [here!](#)



Opening remarks and keynote speech



Javier Zarzalejos,
Chair of the European Parliament
LIBE Committee

Věra Jourová,
Vice-President of the European Commission for Values and
Transparency, Responsible for Democracy, rule of law, media
pluralism and fight against disinformation

Panel 1



Ana Gallego Torres,
Director-General for Justice,
European Commission

Clare Ovey,
Director of Human Rights
Directorate General Human
Rights and Rule of Law, Council
of Europe

Róbert Répássy,
State Secretary for Parliamentary
Affairs and Deputy Minister, Ministry
of Justice, Hungarian Presidency of the
Council of the European Union

Panel 2



Marc van der Woude,
President of the General Court of
the European Union

Andreas Accardo,
Head of Unit for Institutional
Cooperation and Networks,
European Union Agency for
Fundamental Rights

Ioannis Ktistakis,
Judge of the European Court
of Human Rights, President of
Section III

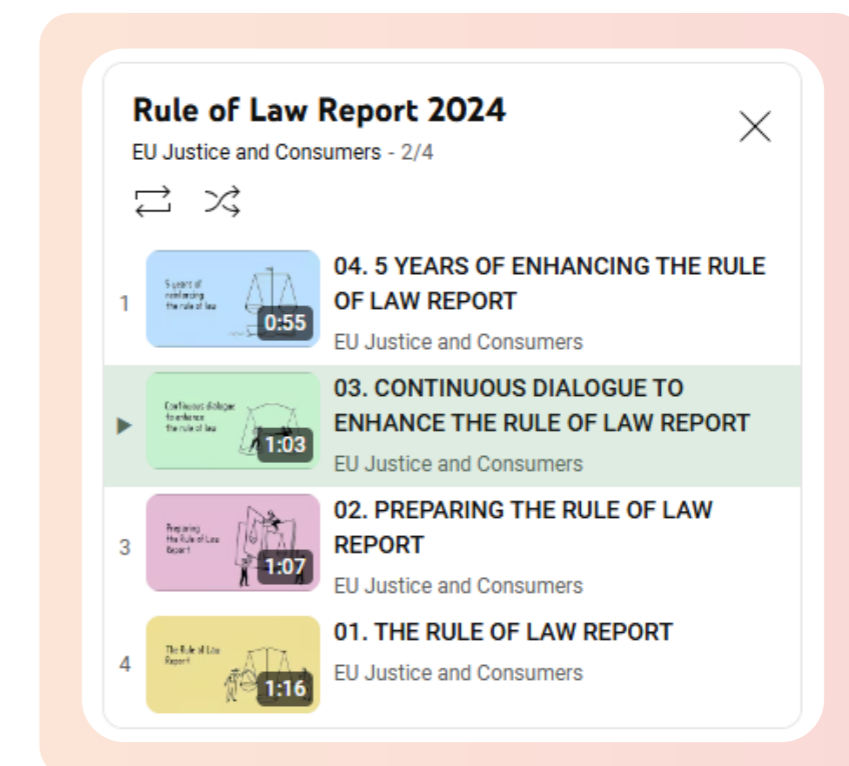


In line with the CCBE's aim to advocate for the upholding of democracy and an effective functioning justice system, the CCBE also chose "Independent lawyers, stronger democracies: understanding why self-regulation matters" as the 2024 European Lawyers' Day (ELD) theme, which takes place on 25 October every year (see more details in the dedicated highlight).

Furthermore, the organisation contributed to the European Commission's 2024 Rule of Law Report, which was published on 24

July 2024, highlighting several concerns, as well as highlighting the key role of lawyers and Bars in ensuring access to justice. In conjunction with the report, the European Commission also launched a Rule of Law Campaign. As part of this campaign, the CCBE President Pierre-Dominique Schupp (photo 1) contributed as a guest speaker in four videos, which explain and give details regarding the Report. ■

Read the Report [here](#) and watch the videos [here](#).



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024

Towards the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer

After nearly a decade of work, the Council of Europe's Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer is nearing realisation. This Convention aims to strengthen access to justice, protect citizens' rights, and uphold the rule of law. During this time, the CCBE has been actively working on its drafting through a dedicated working group and attending the nine meetings of the Council of Europe Committee of Experts on the Protection of Lawyers (CJ-AV).

The CCBE further worked on promoting the Convention as well, urging support from key actors to make it a reality and emphasising its importance at various

events, such as at during a series of high-level meetings (photos 1 and 2) with the Council of Europe throughout the year, and at the reception on 14 May 2024 (photo 4 and 5), which was organised by the CCBE, together with Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the Council of Europe, Patrick Engelberg (photo 3). The event was a great success, gathering numerous high-level individuals, including the President, Registrar, and several judges of the European Court of Human Rights, a number of ambassadors and representatives of the Council of Europe, as well as participants of the CJ-AV.



> CCBE President, Pierre-Dominique Schupp, and the Council of Europe Secretary-General, Marija Pejčinović Burić, after a meeting on 14 May 2024 in Strasbourg.





→ Continued: "Towards the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer"

As part of this effort, an information leaflet was also drafted by the CCBE and shared on 8 October 2024 to raise awareness about the Convention and its significance for the legal profession, the justice system, as well as citizens.

Find the informational leaflet available [here](#).



Available in [Czech](#) | [English](#) | [French](#) | [Hungarian](#) | [Lithuanian](#) | [Portuguese](#) | [Spanish](#)

On 20 November 2024, a significant milestone was achieved when the Council of Europe's European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) adopted the text of the Convention during its plenary meeting, which was attended by the Chair of the CCBE European Convention Working Group, Laurent Pettiti. This marks a crucial step towards establishing a comprehensive framework for safeguarding lawyers' rights to exercise their profession without fear of discrimination, improper interference, hindrance, or harassment, as well as setting standards for professional associations of lawyers and a robust monitoring mechanism.

Besides supporting the drafting of the Convention, the CCBE has also been working extensively to promote it, recognising its potential to strengthen the protection of lawyers and, by extension, the rule of law and fundamental rights of citizens. With this aim in mind, the organisation has been advocating its importance in numerous events and engaging with various stakeholders, including governments, legal professionals, and civil society organisations, to build support for the Convention.

As the Convention moves closer to becoming a reality, the CCBE continues to advocate for its swift adoption and implementation. As part of the effort, the CCBE will also dedicate the theme of the 2025 European Lawyers' Day to this. ■



Available in [English](#) | [French](#) | [Hungarian](#)



Find the official publication of the Council Europe promoting the Convention [here](#) and [here](#) on LinkedIn.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024

Awareness campaign about the independence of lawyers

The CCBE designated "independent lawyers, stronger democracies: understanding why self-regulation matters" as the theme for European Lawyers' Day (ELD) on 25 October 2024. This theme was chosen to enhance understanding of the significance of self-regulation and its intrinsic link to the health of democratic societies.

In preparation for ELD, the CCBE published an [explanatory note](#) outlining what self-regulation entails and why it is essential for the justice system and citizens. Furthermore, an [article](#) was written by CCBE expert and Chair of the CCBE Deontology Committee, Eric Balate, on "self-regulation and the Deontology Committee", as well as a social media campaign launched to raise awareness on the matter.

EUROPEAN LAWYERS' DAY | 25 OCTOBER 2024



Independent lawyers, stronger democracies:
understanding why self-regulation matters

What is self-regulation of the legal profession?

Self-regulation of the legal profession enables professional bodies or associations to govern their members in a manner that ensures that they are not subject to undue influence from the State or other external pressures.

There is no one unique form of self-regulation. In various European countries, the legal profession is subject to a combination of state regulation and self-regulation. Therefore, self-regulation does not necessarily mean exclusive and full regulation by the legal profession. In many cases, the State provides Bars and/or Law Societies with the authority to regulate the practice of the profession by providing Bars and Law Societies with the legal framework to establish professional rules. States also, for example, ensure and uphold the protection of various principles, including the principle of lawyer-client confidentiality.

Why is self-regulation needed?

Self-regulation protects lawyers from external influences that could compromise their integrity and independence, which are essential for a functioning democracy. In many parts of the world, lawyers face pressure from governments or other entities that seek to control or influence their work. Self-regulation acts as a buffer against such pressures, enabling lawyers to act in the best interests of their clients and the justice system.

Self-regulation also enables lawyers to exercise their profession in full independence, which is a prerequisite for effective legal representation and advice. It thus prioritises the rights and needs of clients and the integrity of the legal system over the interests of individual practitioners. As such, self-regulation is a significant component for the proper administration of justice. Self-regulation also ensures that lawyers maintain high standards and professional competence.

*See also Principle 1 of the CCBE Charter of Core Principles of the European Legal Profession CCBE | PAGE 1

Available in [English](#) | [French](#) | [Hungarian](#) | [Estonian](#)



Additionally, to celebrate the occasion, several CCBE member Bars throughout Europe organised events dedicated to the day and theme, including conferences, roundtables, podcasts, and various commemorative activities.

Find more details on all the events organised by the Bars on the CCBE's dedicated webpage [here](#).

Moreover, the CCBE further promoted the importance of protecting the independence of the legal profession and judicial system in its response to the report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers on "safeguarding the independence of judicial systems in the face of contemporary challenges to democracy".

In this response, the CCBE welcomed the acknowledgement of the key role that judges, lawyers, and Bars play in the safeguarding of the rule of law and citizens' rights, while also highlighting some concerns and suggestions in order to increase clarity and further improve the rule of law and access to justice.

Lastly, the CCBE also used the opportunity to urge states to support and commit to the endorsement and implementation of the Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer (see further details in the dedicated highlight). ■

Read the full CCBE response to the report [here](#).

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024

Advocating for lawyers' training and digitalisation of justice

In its Manifesto, as mentioned in the dedicated highlight above, the CCBE advocated for EU institutions to commit to providing the necessary funding for the development of comprehensive, ongoing training for legal professionals on cross-border and EU law-related matters. In particular, the CCBE stressed the pertinent need for the training of legal professionals on the digitalisation of justice, ensuring that they are well-equipped with the skills and knowledge required to navigate and leverage emerging technologies in their practice. To this end, the CCBE called on the EU institutions to introduce a funding mechanism designed to facilitate large-scale, cost-effective, well-resourced, and structured training for lawyers across the EU — similar to that which exists at a centralised level for judges and prosecutors — ensuring effective legal representation, while addressing imbalances and inequalities within the legal process.

During 2024, the CCBE was also involved in several projects related to the training of lawyers, including the European Commission-financed project “Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU) Hearings’ Recording as a Judicial Training Tool”, created in cooperation with the Court of Justice of the European Union, the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN), and the CCBE. The aim of the project was to increase the awareness, knowledge, and skills of justice professionals about the procedures at the CJEU. As a result, six training videos were produced, and the CCBE published an accompanying information leaflet.

Watch the six training videos available on the EU Academy Portal [here](#), and the CCBE informational leaflet [here](#).



In addition, the CCBE continued its work on the BREULAW project (Development of a lawyer’s training curriculum in EU law and study visits to EU institutions in Brussels) (photo 1) and the TRAVAR project (Training of lawyers on various areas of EU Law) (see details under the projects section below).



Furthermore, the CCBE focused this year on intensifying its efforts to advocate for the training of lawyers at various events and meetings with relevant stakeholders. Notably, this included the Seminar on the Council of Europe European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) and the 2024 Annual Council of Europe HELP Network Conference (photo 2). During the latter event, CCBE Secretary-General Simone Cuomo (photo 3), emphasised, in particular, the need for comprehensive training to ensure the digital empowerment of lawyers, as well as presented the activities of the CCBE in promoting the professional development of lawyers in Europe.

→ Continued on page 30



→ Continued: "Advocating for lawyers' training and digitalisation of justice"

The CCBE additionally intervened at the 2024 European Judicial Training Conference organised by the European Commission and the Belgian Judicial Training Institute, to reiterate the importance of ensuring that all legal professionals, including lawyers, equally benefit from judicial training on EU law supported by EU funding, especially in light of the developments in the digitalisation of justice.

More generally on the digitalisation of justice, the CCBE participated in several events to urge for the respect of fundamental legal principles and raise potential risks during this development.

This included the high-level expert conference on “enhancing European legal competitiveness – AI and advanced technologies for better justice and legislation”, which was co-organised by the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the EU 2024, the Ministry of Justice of Hungary, and the European Commission. The CCBE further brought attention to these matters at the 52nd European Presidents’ Conference of Bars and Law Societies (photo 4 and 5) organised by the Austrian Bar in Vienna on the topic of “Big data, fewer rights – will AI change the rule of law forever?”, and at an event on the EU-US agreement on e-evidence organised by the Centre for Information

Policy Leadership (CIPL). Moreover, the CCBE organised a joint webinar with the European Lawyers Foundation (ELF) in regard to "the impact of artificial intelligence on European lawyers' practices" on 18 November 2024.



For details on the webinar and to watch the recording, see [here](#).

Lastly, throughout the year, the CCBE actively called for the involvement of lawyers and other legal professionals in the digitalisation of justice in numerous occasions, such as during an online meeting with representatives from the Council of the European Union General Secretariat and representatives from the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, as well as in the final Me-CODEX III conference with representatives from national Ministries of Justice, the European Commission, and the EU agency eu-LISA. ■

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024

The growing concern for the safety of lawyers in the exercise of their profession in 2024

Throughout 2024, the CCBE expressed growing concern about the safety of lawyers in the exercise of their profession. The organisation emphasised the importance of safeguarding lawyers from attacks, threats, harassment, and intimidation, which are essential for the proper administration of justice and the rule of law.

As part of its ongoing commitment, the CCBE continued to send letters of concern and joined several initiatives in support of endangered lawyers across various countries, including a statement regarding the situation of lawyers in Tunisia, and particularly that of lawyers Sonia Dahmani, Mehdi Zagroubain, and Nidhal Salhi.

Read the whole statement regarding the situation of lawyers in Tunisia [here](#), and all the CCBE Human Rights initiatives and letters accessible on the dedicated portal [here](#).

The CCBE was also actively involved in the International Day of the Endangered Lawyer, which focused this year on the situation of lawyers in Iran, by participating in the joint press conference held on 22 January 2024. The press conference opened with preliminary remarks by the Chair of the CCBE Human Rights Committee, Stefan von Raumer, and the co-signed joint statement was published on the same day. Moreover, to further support Iranian lawyers, on 24 January 2024, the CCBE, together with numerous lawyers and lawyers' organisations, gathered in Brussels to show solidarity.

Find the joint statement available and more information [here](#).

Furthermore, the CCBE also published a report on threatening behaviour and aggression towards lawyers in the course of their work on the occasion of Human Rights Day on 10 December 2024. The findings of the report,

combined with data on the rising instances of threats and violence across Europe, highlighted the urgent need for measures to protect lawyers and ensure their essential role in upholding justice, fundamental rights, and the rule of law. In light of this, the CCBE strongly urged and expressed support for the adoption of the Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer in its report, which would establish these critical safeguards for lawyers (see the dedicated highlight above).

Read the CCBE report on threatening behaviour and aggression towards lawyers in the course of their work [here](#).

→ Continued: on page 32





> From left to right: Second Vice-President of the CCBE, Thierry Wickers, Chair of the European Parliament Subcommittee on Human Rights (DROI), Mounir Satouri (photo 3), Head of the Legal Clinic of the Panzi Foundation, David Bugamba Amani (photo 2), and Chair of the CCBE Human Rights Committee, Stefan von Raumer



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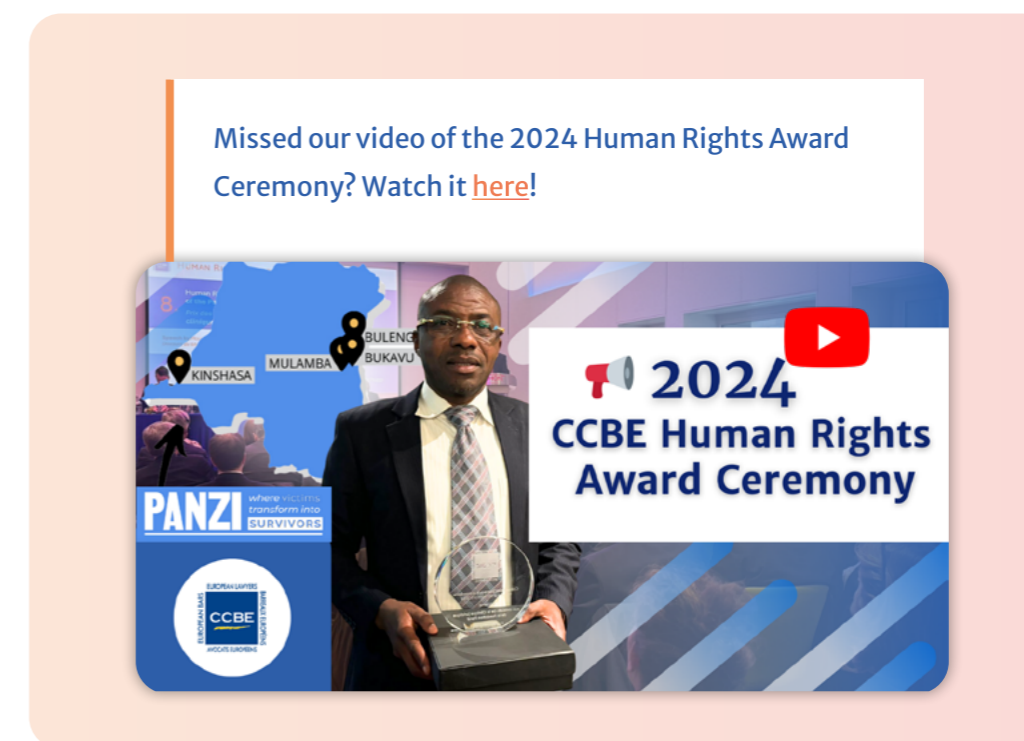
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→ Continued: "The growing concern for the safety of lawyers in the exercise of their profession in 2024"

Relatedly, the CCBE granted its 2024 Human Rights Award to the Lawyers of the Panzi Foundation's Legal Clinic, during the CCBE Plenary Session on 21 November 2024, in recognition of their exceptional commitment to ensuring victims of sexual violence as a weapon of war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) receive holistic care, comprehensive non-discriminatory legal representation, and access to justice. With this award, the CCBE wished to raise awareness and acknowledge the outstanding work of the lawyers of the Panzi Foundation's Legal Clinic in upholding the fundamental

values of the legal profession, as well as defending and advocating for human rights and respect for the rule of law, despite the ongoing conflicts and social crisis in the DRC.

For further details on the CCBE Human Rights Award and the Legal Clinic of the Panzi Foundation, see the dedicated webpage on the CCBE Human Rights Portal [here](#).



Committees & Working Groups

OVERVIEW OF PUBLICATIONS IN 2024

Anti-Money Laundering

- CCBE paper regarding AML supervision and practices by Bars (17/05/2024)



Environment & Climate Change

- CCBE statement on the Study from the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) on the need for and feasibility of a further instrument or instruments on human rights and the environment (05/12/2024)



Criminal Law

- CCBE response to the European Commission "Call for evidence" on the Implementation and Impact of the EPPO Regulation and the Effectiveness and Efficiency of the EPPO's Working Practices (24/10/2024)

Family & Succession Law

- CCBE position paper on the European Commission proposed Regulation regarding the protection of vulnerable adults (21/03/2024)
- CCBE comments on the Council Presidency redraft of Chapters II and III of the Parenthood Proposal (31/10/2024)

EU Lawyers

- CCBE recommendation on the recognition of certificates under Directive 98/5 (08/07/2024)

Human Rights

- The CCBE sent 63 letters in support of more than 97 endangered lawyers to 34 countries around the world.
- Joint report on Iran published on the occasion of the International Day of the Endangered Lawyer (DEL) 2024
- Joint statement on the rising systemic persecution of lawyers in Iran (22/01/2024)
- Petition for Iran on the occasion of DEL 2024 (24/01/2024)
- Joint statement calling China to release human rights lawyer Yu Wensheng and activist Xu Yan (12/04/2024)
- CCBE statement on the situation of lawyers in Tunisia (17/05/2024)
- Joint statement in the lack of justice for the unlawful killing of Kurdish lawyer Tahir Elci (05/06/2024)
- Joint letter for the case of Kurdish lawyer Tahir Elci (05/06/2024)
- Joint letter from Dutch bar associations and the CCBE regarding the case of M'Hamed Hali (26/06/2024)
- Joint statement on the disbarment Aleksey Ladin (02/08/2024)



- Joint statement following the sentencing of lawyer Sonia Dahmani (11/09/2024)
- Joint statement calling for the universal abolition of the death penalty (10/10/2024)
- Joint statement for arrested and detained Sudanese Lawyer Montaser Abdullah (28/10/2024)
- Joint statement calling for the release of lawyer Hoda Abdelmonem (31/10/2024)
- CCBE response to the report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers (05/11/2024)
- Joint statement calling for the urgent release of human rights lawyer Yu Wensheng and activist Xu Yan (12/11/2024)
- Joint statement on lawyer Xu Zhiyong's hunger strike over inhumane treatment in Lunan prison (12/11/2024)
- CCBE report on threatening behaviour and aggression towards lawyers (2024)



European Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer

- Explanatory leaflet | A Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer



Permanent Delegation to the Human Court of Human Rights

- CCBE proposals for the upcoming online ECtHR application form (17/05/2024)

Insurance

CCBE key principles and best practices in the relationship between lawyers and legal expenses insurers (17/05/2024)

Migration

CCBE position paper on the proposal for a directive laying down minimum rules to prevent and counter the facilitation of unauthorised entry transit and stay in the Union (17/05/2024)

CCBE statement on recent developments and upcoming EU actions in the field of asylum (21/11/2024)

Rule of Law

CCBE contribution for the 2024 Rule of Law Report (14/02/2024)

Permanent Delegation to the Court of Justice and the General Court of the European Union and the EFTA Court

- CCBE comments on the draft Rules of Procedure of the Court of Justice and the General Court (27/02/2024)

- CCBE response to the EFTA Courts Consultation paper on the report for the hearing in Advisory Opinion Cases (15/04/2024)

- CCBE comments on the draft Practice Rules of the General Court (28/06/2024)



CCBE-ELF Lawyers' training curriculum in EU Law (2024)

Surveillance

CCBE letter on the protection of confidentiality of lawyer-client communications in the context of the activities of the High-Level Group (HLG) on access to data for effective law enforcement (15/04/2024)

CCBE recommendations for Bars on the implementation of the e-Evidence Regulation (21/11/2024)

Tax



CCBE response to the public consultation regarding directive on administrative cooperation (DAC) evaluation (29/07/2024)

Training

Lawyers' training curriculum in EU Law (2024)

CJEU Hearings' Recording as a Judicial Training Tool (2024)

Committees & Working Groups

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES IN 2024

CHAIR: ELISABETH SCHEUBA (AUSTRIA)

Access to Justice



The Access to Justice Committee organised the presentation of the EU Justice Scoreboard with the representatives of the European Commission, followed by an exchange of views with the experts of the Committee. In addition, the Committee coordinated and provided support to the Commission in gathering the relevant data from national Bars for the EU Scoreboard analysis.

As part of its annual workplan, the Committee followed the work of the European Commission Expert Group Against Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPP) and the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission in this area.

Moreover, a comprehensive discussion was organised with the experts of the Committee on pro bono-related issues, which resulted in the conclusion that further clarification regarding legal aid and pro bono is necessary, especially for

different authorities at national authorities, explicitly dividing both concepts, as well as indicating the relevant role of the Bar.

Furthermore, based on the updated CCBE recommendations on legal aid, an exchange of views was initiated on the use of these recommendations by CCBE members at national level, as well as on important developments in different countries related to legal aid and the work of lawyers (among other aspects, on rates of fees and other terms of remuneration of legal aid work of lawyers). This discussion will be continued in 2025.

CHAIR: CLAUDIO COCUZZA (ITALY)

Anti-Money Laundering



The CCBE Anti-Money Laundering Committee continued to monitor the progress on the Anti-Money Laundering (AML) package. In early 2024, the CCBE engaged with EU decision-makers in order to reiterate some key points, for example, stressing that the introduction of an oversight requirement at the EU level under the new AML Directive should be accompanied by provisions safeguarding the independence of Bars and lawyers.

Since the adoption of the package, the AML Committee has been analysing the final texts and their impact on Bars and lawyers, while also monitoring the initiatives relating to the implementation. For instance, the CCBE was granted an observer status to the informal Non-Financial Sector Sub-group thanks to the openness of the European Commission.

In addition, the CCBE undertook actions aimed at raising awareness about the new rules among lawyers, including [two webinars](#) which were co-organised with the European Lawyers Foundation regarding the AML package, each attended by more than 1000 participants.

The CCBE also concluded its data collection conducted from 2022 to 2024 regarding the supervisory measures and practices by Bars in the field of AML. The findings of this exercise were presented in the CCBE [paper](#) regarding AML supervision and

practices by Bars, which was published on 17 May 2024. The findings demonstrate that Bars seriously engage in and undertake their supervisory duties under the AML framework, as well as that the majority of Bars that are enabled by law to do so, have put in place supervisory measures to ensure that the AML framework is complied with by lawyers. Nevertheless, the paper also provides some recommendations for issues where room for improvement was identified.

Moreover, throughout the year, the CCBE continued to maintain contacts with European and international organisations, such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), European Parliament, Directorate-General for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union (DG FISMA), and Europol. The CCBE's participation in the FATF Private Sector Consultative Forum in April, as well as the attendance of the FATF and Europol representatives at the CCBE expert meeting in October 2024, illustrate these efforts.

Lastly, the CCBE also engaged in meaningful discussions with civil society by taking part in their projects or events, such as the CCBE's exchange with the research centre "Transcrime" and participation in a series of webinars organised by the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) entitled 'Anti-Money Laundering and Professional Service Providers', that led to a [report](#).

CHAIR: ANTIGONI ALEXANDROPOULOU (GREECE)

Company Law



The Company Law Committee continued to monitor key legislative initiatives in company law and corporate governance in 2024, with a particular focus on corporate sustainability due diligence. In this context, a letter was sent outlining the CCBE's concerns regarding the scope of the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) and its potential implications for lawyers' activities. More specifically, the risks associated with not excluding legal services from the chain of activities was highlighted, including potential risks for the professional secrecy and the relationship of trust between lawyers and their clients.

The Committee has also been following the progress of the "Upgrading Digital Company Law" proposal of the European Commission, which led to the adoption of the final text of the Directive in December 2024. The Committee will continue to assess the needs related to its implementation.

Finally, several exchanges have been organised with the European Commission Directorate-General for Justice (DG JUST) Company Law Unit to discuss these developments further.



CHAIR: ONDREJ LACIAK (SLOVAKIA)

Criminal Law



The Criminal Law Committee had another busy year in 2024.

In February 2024, representatives from the CCBE (and the European Criminal Bar Association) had a meeting with representatives from both the Criminal Justice and Criminal Procedural Law Units of the European Commission Directorate-General for Justice (DG JUST). The meeting discussed a range of topics, including evidence (evidence gathering and admissibility), future developments and reform of the European Public Prosecutor Office (EPPO), issues regarding the European Arrest Warrant, pre-trial detention, conflict of jurisdiction/transfer of proceedings, as well as future criminal law initiatives in the area of criminal justice and of criminal procedural law.

On 23 March 2024, the Committee was delighted to also have the opportunity to welcome European Commission representatives to its committee meeting, during which the Commission presented an update on the EPPO current and future developments. The Commission commented that the new Commission will have to evaluate the workings of the EPPO, with a report scheduled for June 2026.

Furthermore, on 24 October 2024, the Criminal Law Committee submitted a response to the European Commission call for evidence on the implementation and impact of the EPPO Regulation and the effectiveness and efficiency of the EPPO's working practices. The CCBE response was prepared as a contribution to the Commission evaluation process on the EPPO. In its response, the CCBE urged the Commission to take into account issues regarding access to case files, evidence, the uniform application of defence rights, interpretation and translation services, and jurisdictional matters.

Moreover, the Criminal Law Committee was pleased to have representatives from the Polish Presidency join the meeting of the Criminal Law Committee on 23 November 2024. The representatives spoke about the objectives and priorities of the Polish Presidency in the area of criminal law (the Polish Presidency commences in January 2025 for a six-month period).

Lastly, the Committee meeting also discussed a range of other issues, including the expected new Commission priorities in the area of criminal law.

CHAIR: ERIC BALATE (BELGIUM)

Deontology

The Deontology Committee continued its assessment of the CCBE Code of Conduct (in light of the adoption of the Model Code) through a dedicated working group. It also reflected on third-party litigation funding (TPLF) and third-party ownership of law firms. Additionally, at the request of the CCBE Environment and Climate Change Committee (ENVCC), it started examining deontological implications

of climate change and the activities associated therewith. Moreover, the Committee continued its reflection on the core principle of non-discrimination and equality, bringing the discussion to an advanced stage, as well as continued to address deontological questions from CCBE members.



CHAIR: JEAN-MARC GOLLIER (BELGIUM)

Environment and Climate Change

The CCBE Environment and Climate Change (ENVCC) Committee focused in 2024 on implementing the commitments outlined in the CCBE's initial statement on climate change. A key achievement was the publication of the CCBE's second carbon footprint report on 25 March 2024. The CCBE Secretariat also continued to improve its eco-management practices following the ecolabel obtained in 2023.

Throughout 2024, the ENVCC Committee worked closely with the Council of Europe's Drafting Group on Human Rights and Environment (CDDH-ENV), where it acts as an observer. In this context, the Committee followed developments related to the

Council of Europe's work on the need for further instruments on human rights and the environment. As part of this, the CCBE published a [statement](#) on the Study from the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) on the need for and feasibility of a further instrument or instruments on human rights and the environment.

Lastly, the ENVCC focused on drafting a CCBE guidance on the impact of climate change on the legal profession, with the outcome of these discussions expected to be published in 2025.



CHAIR: JOANNA WISŁA-PŁONKA (POLAND)

VICE-CHAIR: MICHAEL PALOFF (AUSTRIA)

EU Lawyers

The EU Lawyers Committee continued its work on examining issues related to lawyers' cross-border practice in the EU and closely monitored policy developments in the field of regulated professions and legal services. As part of its activities, the Committee prepared a recommendation on the recognition of certificates under Directive 98/5, which was adopted in July 2024. Additionally, discussions continued regarding modernised ways to enhance cooperation between Bars in cross-border matters.

The Committee also maintained regular contact with the European Commission's Directorate-General for the Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) on key developments affecting the free movement of lawyers. In this regard, a meeting was held in October with the relevant Policy Unit responsible for regulated professions.



CHAIR: LAURENT PETTITI (FRANCE)

European Convention on the Profession of Lawyer



In 2024, the CCBE Convention Working Group remained deeply involved in the drafting process of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer. As an observer within the Council of Europe's European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) and Committee of Experts on the Protection of Lawyers (CJ-AV), the CCBE provided significant contributions to ensure the Convention effectively addresses key issues for the legal profession.

The year began with the participation in the 7th meeting of the CJ-AV, where discussions on the draft Convention progressed. In April 2024, the CCBE submitted its contributions to the draft Convention and its Explanatory Report, which were later defended during the 8th meeting of the CJ-AV in May 2024. A reception was also organised

to highlight the importance of the Convention and encourage Member States to support its adoption. Moreover, further discussions within the CDCJ throughout the year addressed critical elements such as the monitoring mechanism and implementation procedures, ensuring that the Convention meets the needs of all stakeholders.

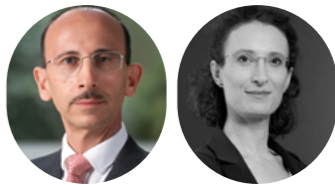
The drafting process concluded during the 9th meeting of the CJ-AV in September 2024, marking an important milestone in the Convention's finalisation. The CCBE's active engagement throughout the year reinforced its commitment to advancing the protection of the legal profession and ensuring the Convention's successful adoption under Luxembourg's Council of Europe Presidency.



CHAIR: PEDRO PORTELLANO DÍEZ (SPAIN)

SINCE FEBRUARY 2024: BEATRICE DESHAYES (GERMANY)

European Private Law



The European Private Law Committee continued to monitor the developments of the legislative files regarding the European Commission proposals for a Directive on artificial intelligence liability and on liability for defective products in 2024. The Committee had exchanges with the EU institutions to reiterate its concerns raised in its response to the European Commission consultation on these matters in 2023, and the Chair of the Committee urged for these points to be taken account when representing the CCBE as an Advisor of the ELI project on the reform of the Product Liability Directive.

In addition, the Committee also followed several other initiatives, including the European Commission initiative on "Digital fairness – fitness check on EU consumer law", the European Commission proposal for a Regulation on combating late payment in commercial transactions, and the European Commission report on the Consumer Protection Cooperation Regulation.

Furthermore, the Committee continued analysing the work of the European Commission's proposals for a Directive amending the Alternative Dispute Resolution Directive and a Regulation to repeal the Online Dispute Resolution

Regulation, as well as a recommendation on quality requirements for dispute resolution procedures offered by online marketplaces and Union trade associations. In this regard, the Committee, together with the CCBE Access to Justice Committee and IT Law Committee, reviewed the initiative and held a joint discussion on 7 February 2024.

Moreover, the Committee continued to follow the work of the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH), the European Law Institute (ELI), and the European Judicial Network (EJN) in civil and commercial matters. Aside from being part of the ELI project on the reform of the Product Liability Directive, the CCBE additionally participated in the HCCH Council of General Affairs and Policy meeting, the EJN Annual Meeting, and several relevant ELI webinars (particularly on the project on Guiding Principles and Model Rules on Algorithmic Contracts, as well as the Access to Digital Assets Project and Model Rules on Succession of Digital Assets, Data and other Digital Remains Project), ensuring also the maintenance on good relations with these organisations.

CHAIR: ELODIE MULON (FRANCE)

Family and Succession Law



In 2024, the Family and Succession Law Committee continued its work on key issues impacting family and succession law across the EU. The Committee remained actively involved in the European Commission's initiative on the recognition of parenthood between Member States, continuously lobbying the EU institutions for the points it raised in its preliminary observations and position paper once the proposal was published in 2023. As part of the lobbying effort, the Committee prepared some additional [comments](#) in response to the European Parliament's work on the proposal, particularly on Chapters II and III of the proposal, and had a meeting with the Council to further urge the consideration of its concerns mentioned.

Additionally, following several rounds of deliberations in the Committee at the start of 2024, the CCBE adopted a [position paper](#) in March 2024 on the published proposal of the European Commission for a Regulation and Council Decision on the protection of vulnerable adults. The CCBE had several exchanges with the EU institutions and relevant actors to advocate that the issues mentioned are taken into account, including with the Council and the European Judicial Network (EJN) in civil and commercial matters. The Committee also monitored relevant projects by the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH) and the European Law Institute (ELI), particularly regarding parentage and surrogacy, as well as on succession. In relation to succession, the CCBE, represented by the Chair of the Committee, became a member of the EJN

Succession Working Group, with the meeting developments followed closely by the Committee. The Committee also regularly followed the work of the ELI on its project regarding the succession of digital assets and access to personal data, and towards the end of 2024 began reviewing the first draft prepared by the ELI. The Committee will continue analysing in 2025 the draft work of the ELI for this project and provide input when necessary. More generally, the CCBE continued maintaining its good relations with these European and international organisations by participating in further meetings, including the HCCH Council of General Affairs and Policy meeting, the EJN annual meeting, as well as several ELI meetings.

Lastly, the Committee remained actively engaged with the Council of Europe's work following a request from the Council of Europe to provide input on the draft recommendation on the rights and best interests of the child in care proceedings and its accompanying explanatory memorandum. To this end, the Committee prepared comments, which were approved and submitted to the Council of Europe on 31 July 2024. Subsequently, the CCBE also was invited to the Council of Europe joint plenary session of the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) and the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF) on 3 December 2024 to discuss the feedback given on this draft recommendation and approve the document.

CHAIR: CHRISTIAN LEMKE (GERMANY)

Future of the Legal Profession and Legal Services



The Future Committee continued its work on developing its thinking and the paper on innovation in legal services. In April 2024, the Committee invited Nigel Spencer from Queen Mary University of London and Vinciane Gillet from the Brussels Bars Incubator to discuss the current challenges facing the profession, such as management, career progression, attractiveness, and innovation.

In the second half of the year, the Committee conducted a CCBE-wide survey on innovation in legal services which focused on challenges, opportunities and barriers to innovation,

as well as on Bars' priorities in supporting innovation. The results of the survey were presented by the Chair of the Committee at the Academy of European Law (ERA) Forum of Legal Professions on 8 November and at the European Parliament event during the CCBE Plenary Session on 22 November 2024.

Furthermore, the Committee continued to reflect on key issues regarding the attractiveness of and the retention in the legal profession, as well as on the key features of the proposed CCBE database and network on the regulation of the profession of a lawyer.



CHAIR: STEFAN VON RAUMER (GERMANY)
VICE-CHAIR: MAGDALENA WITKOWSKA (POLAND)



Human Rights

In addition to the CCBE Human Rights Award (see the highlights section for further details), the CCBE continued to act in support of lawyers being harassed, threatened, imprisoned, and even murdered because of their professional activities. In 2024, the CCBE sent over 63 letters addressing the situation of more than 97 endangered lawyers in 34 countries around the world.

Read the [overview](#) of the CCBE letters sent in 2024.

Moreover, the CCBE, with other Bars, Law Societies, and lawyers' associations, issued several joint statements and participated in joint actions in support of endangered lawyers, including the International Day of the Endangered Lawyer 2024, which focused on the situation of lawyers in Iran. On this occasion, the CCBE, together with the Coalition of the Day of the Endangered lawyer, organised an online press conference.

More details can be found on the CCBE [Human Rights Portal](#).

Furthermore, the CCBE continued to strengthen its cooperation with its Human Rights Network, as well as with Human Rights NGOs, in order to achieve synergies in supporting persecuted

lawyers. The CCBE also collaborated with the new UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Margaret Satterthwaite, in support of persecuted lawyers, as well as published a joint [statement](#) for the universal abolition of the death penalty.

Lastly, the CCBE granted the award of the second edition of the CCBE Amicus Curiae Contest at the CCBE Plenary Session in Lausanne.

For more information on the CCBE Amicus Curiae Contest, see our dedicated webpage [here](#)!



CHAIR: HERMAN BUYSENS (BELGIUM)



Insurance

The Insurance Committee regularly monitored and analysed issues regarding the lawyers' professional indemnity insurance (PII), with a particular focus on cross-border practice. In the area of legal expenses insurance, the Committee finalised the CCBE [key principles](#) and best practices in the relationship between lawyers and legal expenses insurers, which were adopted by the Plenary Session on 17 May 2024. These principles aim to enhance the understanding and implementation of the principle of free choice of a lawyer.

Additionally, concerning PII, the Committee reviewed the updated questionnaire and report (in 2023), which provided an overview of the regulatory framework and cost of PII for lawyers at the national level. Based on these findings, the Committee intends to put forward key recommendations on PII in the coming year. The Committee remains committed to ensuring adequate insurance coverage for lawyers while safeguarding their independence and professional obligations.

CHAIR: CARLO FORTE (ITALY)



International Legal Services

In 2024, the CCBE focused on the analysis of the Recommendation of the European Commission regarding the recognition of qualifications of third-country nationals, which was published on 15 November 2023. The CCBE held discussions with the European Commission Directorate-General for Trade (DG TRADE) and Directorate General for the Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) to better understand the paper.

agreements. The question of recognition of foreign qualifications was also touched upon as it seems to be among the priorities of the Commission as a corollary to the question of mobility, skills, and attracting talent, across various Commission initiatives.

Moreover, the Committee launched an analysis of the data from CCBE experts and members in order to understand the state of play of the rules regulating joint practice between foreign lawyers and EU lawyers in CCBE member countries.

Finally, the CCBE followed the progress in the conclusion by the EU of various free trade agreements and followed developments regarding the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

In July 2024, a video meeting took place between the representatives of the CCBE and DG TRADE. The meeting was an occasion to present the CCBE's views on several topics related to trade in legal services, such as on Foreign Legal Consultant Status and the CCBE Guide of 2022, and mutual recognition

CHAIR: DOMINIC GERSTBERGER (AUSTRIA)

IT Law



The IT Law Committee continued its discussion on the impact of AI on lawyers and legal practice, with a focus on the assessment of the implications of the AI Act for the profession and its provisions on prohibited practices and high-risk classification. To this end, the Committee started a reflection on the possible criteria determining the risk level of using AI in the justice system and by lawyers.

The Committee also followed the negotiations on the Council of Europe's Convention on AI, human rights, democracy, and rule of law, as well as their conclusions. It submitted a letter to the last Plenary Session of the Council of Europe Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI) in March 2024, arguing in favour of a broad scope of the Convention (covering public and private sector), and that any invocation of national security to override fundamental rights must be subject to the rule of law, and that such invocation should not be arbitrary, opaque, or unreasonable.

Furthermore, the Committee discussed the current challenges regarding digitalisation of justice in the EU and Member States, including on lawyer identity management (also with a dedicated subgroup on that topic) and the implications of the newly adopted Regulation on digitalisation of cross-border judicial proceedings. It further contributed to the informal stakeholder outreach on the possible

future priorities of the Commission in the area of digitalisation of justice.

Together with the experts from the CCBE Future of the Legal Profession and Legal Services Committee, Deontology Committee, and selected IT Law Committee members reflected on the implications of generative AI on lawyers, with a view to prepare a CCBE paper on the topic.

Furthermore, the subgroup LUCS (Lawyers Use of Cloud Services) within the Committee discussed and prepared the draft final guidelines on lawyers' use of cloud computing, which is a revised version of the 2012 guidelines.

Moreover, the Committee was consulted by the expert from the European Lawyers Foundation (ELF) during the preparation of the ELF "Analysis of existing material on AI developed at EU level for lawyers and proposals for their updates"

Lastly, the Committee held an exchange of views with the Commission on the implementation of the AI Act and its implications for the legal profession during its meeting in May 2024. During the same meeting, and together with the CCBE Surveillance Working Group and Criminal Law Committee, it held an exchange of views with another Commission representative on the implementation of the e-Evidence Regulation.

CHAIR: NOEMÍ ALARCÓN VELASCO (SPAIN)

Migration



In the first half of 2024, the CCBE remained in contact with the EU institutions to convey its views during the final stages of the adoption of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum (NPMA). The CCBE paid particular attention to the aspects regarding legal assistance and fundamental rights of migrants in the Screening Regulation, Asylum Procedure Regulation, and the Crisis Regulation.

Following the adoption of the NPMA, in the second half of 2024, the CCBE continued to monitor closely the actions related to its implementation. In its exchanges with the EU institutions' representatives and later in a [statement](#) issued on 21 November 2024, the CCBE urged the next Commission and the Commissioner for Migration and Home Affairs to make sure that Member States implement the New Pact while putting in place all the safeguards that it contains, including effective access to high-quality free legal counselling and legal assistance, as well as representation provided by lawyers. The CCBE also called on Member States to consult Bars in the preparation of the implementation plans, notably with regard to legal counselling, with particular caution advised given that the concept is new, legal assistance, and representation. The CCBE also urged the EU authorities, as well as the national authorities of the Member States, to ensure the adequate provision of material and effective human resources

so as to duly guarantee the effective application of procedural safeguards and the effective application in practice of fundamental rights. More generally, in the aforementioned statement, the CCBE expressed its concern about recent developments and announced EU actions in the field of asylum, especially regarding the envisaged "new ways" or "innovative solutions" (such as "return hubs") in the field of asylum, and the declarations contesting the duty of Member States to apply international and European law in force (e.g. New Pact) and the case law of the Court of Justice. Moreover, in light of recent reports concerning intimidation of asylum lawyers, the CCBE stressed that it is unacceptable that lawyers assisting migrants and refugees in compliance with the law are under increased pressure and receive threats mostly from far-right groups.

Furthermore, on 17 May 2024, the CCBE adopted a position paper to express its views on the proposal for a Directive laying down minimum rules to prevent and counter the facilitation of unauthorised entry, transit and stay in the Union (so-called Anti-Smuggling Directive) presented by the Commission on 28 November 2023. The proposal risks to impact lawyers providing assistance to migrants or civil society acting on humanitarian grounds. The CCBE expressed particular concern regarding the potential chilling effect on

lawyers and risks of criminalisation of legal assistance. Consequently, EU legislators should adopt a clearer wording in key provisions of the proposal and include a mandatory, explicit, unambiguous, and broad-in-scope solidarity clause that includes lawyers. Further observations on this so-called Anti-Smuggling Directive were expressed towards the Council in the phase of preparation of its general approach. Additionally, the CCBE presented its position during the 2nd International Conference on Migrant Smuggling organised by the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, in September 2024.

Lastly, the CCBE continued to act as a member and contribute to the work of

Frontex and the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) Consultative Forum, as well as undertook efforts to build and develop cooperation with various institutions, such as the European Commission's Directorate-General Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). In this regard, it is important to mention the CCBE contributions to the PACE report on "Ensuring human rights compliant procedures asylum procedures". In parallel, the CCBE maintained ongoing cooperation with civil society, including the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), which attended the CCBE expert meeting in October 2024 to discuss the provisions on free legal counselling in the NPMA.

CHAIR: PRZEMYSŁAW KAMIL ROSIAK (POLAND)

Permanent delegation of the Court of Justice and the General Court of the European Union and the EFTA Court (PD LUX)



On 9 December 2024, representatives of the CCBE and of the Permanent Delegation of the Court of Justice and the General Court (PD LUX Committee), met with the President and members of the Court of Justice, the General Court, and the European Free Trade Association Court. These meetings offer a crucial platform for practitioners to exchange views on various practical challenges, ongoing procedural changes, and future developments from the courts' perspective. The meeting held in December 2024 also facilitated a

more detailed exchange with the Court and General Court, on the implementation of the reform of the European Judicial System, with the transfer of preliminary ruling competence in certain areas to the General Court (which took effect on 1 October 2024), and the extension of the filtering mechanism.

Furthermore, throughout the year, and in line with its amended Statute, the Court of Justice updated several procedural documents. The CCBE was consulted

during this process and prepared papers on various areas, including the CCBE [comments](#) on the draft Practice Rules of the General Court on 28 June 2024, CCBE [comments](#) on the draft Rules of Procedure of the Court of Justice and the General

Court on 27 February 2024), and the CCBE [response](#) to the EFTA Courts Consultation paper on the report for the hearing in Advisory Opinion Cases on 15 April 2024.

CHAIR: KLAVDIJA KERIN (SLOVENIA)

Platform for Exchange, Cooperation and Outreach (PECO)



Following the requests received, the Platform for Exchange, Cooperation and Outreach (PECO) Committee continued to monitor and assess the developments concerning the legal profession and justice systems in various CCBE associate and observer member countries by organising exchanges between its members, collecting information on different topics, as well as providing relevant assistance if and when requested.

One of the main issues on the agenda of the Committee for 2024 was the monitoring of the situation in Ukraine as regards lawyers and legal services, based on the information provided by the Ukrainian National Bar Association.

In addition, following the decision of the European Council to grant the status of EU candidate country to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Committee conducted an assessment and prepared recommendations for the CCBE Plenary Session on 21 November 2024 in order to change the CCBE observer membership status of the Georgian Bar Association to an associate membership status.

Moreover, on the basis of requests received from associate members of the CCBE, the Committee organised a comprehensive presentation by the representatives of the European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Directorate of the European Commission (DG NEAR) on the enlargement policy and recent country reports. This presentation covered the EU Enlargement Package and provided insights into the EU accession process as it pertains to various countries, particularly in the context of the justice sector. The presentation was followed by a question and answer session, as well as an exchange of views, including on the important role of the Bars during the accession process to EU of the relevant candidate country, and their possible input to the work of the Commission on enlargement.

CHAIR: ACHILLEAS DEMETRIADES (CYPRUS)

Permanent Delegation to the European Court of Human Rights (PD STRAS)



In 2024, the CCBE Permanent Delegation to the European Court of Human Rights (PD STRAS) maintained its commitment to improving the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) system through active engagement with key stakeholders and practical reform initiatives. As an observer in the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) and its bodies, including the Committee of Experts on the System of the European Convention on Human Rights (DH-SYSC) and the Drafting Group on the Evaluation of the First Effects of Protocols No. 15 and No. 16 to the European Convention on Human Rights (DH-SYSC-PRO), the PD STRAS Committee contributed to evaluating the initial effects of Protocols 15 and 16. In addition, representatives participated in drafting group meetings in March and October 2024, informed by the CCBE's survey on Protocol 15 implementation.

Furthermore, improved collaboration with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) was also a major achievement, exemplified by an April roundtable fostering dialogue on executing European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) judgments. This partnership was reinforced during a July PACE Sub-Committee session addressing monitoring processes and payment of just satisfaction.

To enhance court procedures, the CCBE also proposed improvements to the upcoming online ECtHR application form, which were submitted in May 2024. The Committee also developed a draft concept for a Young Lawyers' Secondment Scheme to promote professional development within the ECHR framework.

In November 2024, the CCBE held a bilateral meeting with Government Agents, focusing on improving the handling of "Category 4" cases and facilitating friendly settlements. Discussions explored enhanced transparency, external assistance for backlog management, and a mediation section within the registry. Proposals to reduce the standard settlement period in certain cases were also examined.

These initiatives underscored the CCBE's dedication to strengthening collaboration, addressing systemic challenges, and improving the efficiency and accessibility of the ECtHR.

CHAIR: SEBASTIAN CORDING (GERMANY)

VICE-CHAIR: IAIN G. MITCHELL (UNITED KINGDOM)

Surveillance



In 2024, the Surveillance Working Group followed the work of the High-Level Group (HLG) on law enforcement access to data and the development of their recommendations. The Working Group submitted its [letter](#) on the protection of confidentiality of lawyer-client communications to the HLG in April 2024, and a [joint letter](#) with a wide range of NGO and civil society groups to the Council of the EU and relevant stakeholders in November 2024. The letter argued against some of the proposed measures in the recommendations of the HLG, including the broad provisions on data retention.

The Working Group also carried out a survey on the laws applicable to the access to confidential data held by lawyers to inform its broad work on government access to data.

Moreover, through a dedicated subgroup (along with experts from the Criminal Law Committee), the Working Group analysed the implications of the e-Evidence Regulation on the profession. The subgroup was consulted and provided substantial input to the European Lawyers Foundation guidance for Bars on the national issues regarding the implementation of the regulation at national level. The report included a detailed analysis of the issues that should be taken up by the Bars with their respective authorities during the implementation of the regulation,

such as the protection of lawyer-client confidentiality or the procedure for lawyers to request the issuing of a production or preservation order. Based on this guidance, the CCBE adopted its [recommendations](#) for Bars on the national implementation of the e-Evidence Regulation in November 2024. Together with the IT Law Committee and Criminal Law Committee, the Working Group also held an exchange of views with the Commission in May 2024 on the Regulation and the key issues regarding its implementation.

Furthermore, the Working Group held an exchange of views with a US lawyer on the key features of the US criminal justice system to inform its work on the EU-US negotiations on the e-Evidence Agreement. The Working Group also reflected on the implications of the AI Act for the profession and the justice system, especially with regard to the prohibited AI practices.

Lastly, the Working Group closely monitored the legislative work in the Council on the proposal for a Regulation against child sexual abuse. To this end, it sent a letter to the Belgian Presidency which outlined the CCBE's concerns regarding the compromise Presidency proposal. The letter stressed, in particular, the undermining of encryption, broad nature of communication scanning, and the risks to lawyer-client confidentiality.

CHAIR: SILVIA SPARFELD (GERMANY)



Tax

In 2024, the CCBE Tax Committee continued to monitor the adoption of the proposal of the Commission for a Directive regarding VAT rules for the digital age and its potential impact on professional secrecy. Based on its [paper of 2023](#), the CCBE exchanged with the European Commission to set out possible problems that the introduction of e-reporting and e-invoicing could create for lawyers and understand clarifications on the implications of this proposal. The crucial point is that, in principle, the identity of the client and the lawyer, and the existence of their relationship, are covered by professional secrecy and that lawyers cannot disclose in detail what type of services they provide to their clients.

Moreover, in July 2024, the CCBE submitted its [response](#) to the European Commission public consultation regarding Directive on Administrative Cooperation (DAC). In its response, the CCBE urged that the provision regarding reporting by intermediaries (Article 8a b par. 5) should be reviewed in order to include an obligation for Member States to foresee a waiver from filling information for persons subject to professional secrecy/legal professional privilege. In addition, it was argued that the EU legislators should take into account recent developments of the case-law of the Court of Justice regarding DAC.

Lastly, the CCBE continued to monitor the implementation of DAC6 in various Member States and after the amendment of DAC following the ruling of the Court of Justice of

the EU of 8 December 2023 (Case C-694/20) whereby the Court declared that the obligation for a lawyer to inform other intermediaries involved is not necessary and infringes the right to respect for communications with his or her client.

Regarding DAC6, the CCBE also followed the delivery of the ruling in Case C-623/22 on 29 July 2024, as the CCBE intervened in the proceedings at the national level from which the case originated.

Additionally, the CCBE has also monitored the delivery of the ruling in Case C-432/23, in which it supported the Luxembourg Bar. It is important to note that the ruling confirmed that legal advice provided by a lawyer on matters of company law – in this case on setting up a corporate investment structure – falls within the scope of the strengthened protection of exchanges between lawyers and their clients. Legal advice of a lawyer is covered, whatever the area of law it regards, by the reinforced protection provided by Article 7 of the Charter to the communications between the lawyer and their client.

Lastly, the Committee continued to build and maintain contacts with various stakeholders, such as the European Commission Directorate-General Taxation and Customs Union (DG TAXUD), that held a discussion with the CCBE experts in October 2024.

CHAIR: NIKOLAOS KOUTKIAS (GREECE)



Training

As every year, the Training Committee organised a presentation of the annual European Judicial Training Report of the European Commission, as well as meetings for members to have exchanges on this matter. It also supported the European Commission in collecting data from its members for the next annual Report. In this regard, a webinar was organised on the European Judicial Training Report and a questionnaire for collecting data on 29 May 2024.

The Committee also provided its input and expertise for the High-Level EU Conference “European Judicial Training: Supporting the Digitalisation of Justice”, which was organised by the European Commission in April 2024.

Furthermore, the Training Committee followed and supported the finalisation of two projects, the [BREULAW project](#) and the “[CJEU hearings' recording as a judicial training tool](#)”. As a result, two study visits were organised to the EU institutions in Brussels, where more than 45 lawyers from different EU Member States had an opportunity to learn about the work undertaken by the EU institutions and also receive a presentation on the CCBE activities. In addition, an [EU law curriculum for practising EU lawyers](#) was developed and promoted among the members in November 2024, as well as the six training videos for the judiciary and lawyers were

produced on the mission, jurisdiction, and procedures of the Court of Justice of European Union.

Lastly, the Committee launched a discussion on the implementation of the current [European Judicial Training Strategy for 2021-2024](#) of the European Commission and important aspects to be included in the next policy document of the European Commission, as well as on a possible CCBE position in this regard, which will continue to be discussed in 2025.

CHAIR: IINA-MARI SUPPERI (FINLAND)

Young Lawyers



In 2024, the Young Lawyers Committee continued its work on identifying policy issues affecting young lawyers at the start of their legal careers. Building on its initial discussions, the Committee conducted a questionnaire to collect national information on how young lawyers are represented and organised within Bars and Law Societies. In 2025, based on the findings of this survey, the Committee intends to develop some guidance for CCBE members on strengthening

the representation of young lawyers and addressing key challenges they are facing. The Committee remains committed to fostering dialogue on issues such as the attractiveness of the legal profession, work-life balance, well-being within the profession, and the impact of technological developments on legal practice.

Rule of Law

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES IN 2024

The CCBE's [contribution](#) to the 2024 Rule of Law Report (RoL Report) was adopted by the Standing Committee on 8 February 2024. This submission was prepared in response to the invitation and public consultation launched by the European Commission.

In its report, the CCBE highlighted key rule of law developments and concerns affecting legal professionals, as well as emerging trends that could threaten the independence of lawyers and Bars, as identified by its members across the respective Member States. For example, members of the CCBE reported about the concerns and trends posing a risk to the independence of the legal profession and functioning of the justice system in the following areas: confidentiality of lawyer-client communications; physical, online or legal threats or harassment of lawyers; legal provisions and policies which could negatively influence the independence of the Bar and lawyers; cooperation between the national Bar and the executive branch of the government and supervisory authorities; implementation of the case-law of national, European, and international courts; the perception of the judicial system by the general public; training of lawyers; legal aid; digitalisation of justice; as well as other relevant national developments in various areas.

Additionally, the CCBE took part in the

European Commission's Rule of Law Campaign to promote the 2024 RoL Report. As part of this initiative, CCBE President Pierre-Dominique Schupp featured in the campaign's official promotional [videos](#) to present the CCBE's contribution.

The European Commission presented the 2024 RoL Report at the CCBE Standing Committee meeting on 4 October 2024. During this session, CCBE members had the opportunity to ask questions, share their observations on the report, and provide input on its recommendations to Member States.

The CCBE welcomed the RoL Report's explicit recognition that "*lawyers and Bar Associations play a key role in guaranteeing access to justice and ensuring the protection of fundamental rights, including the right to a fair trial.*" Furthermore, the report underscored that "*an effective justice system requires that lawyers be free to pursue their activities of advising and representing their clients.*"

To ensure continuous monitoring of rule of law issues, the CCBE Rule of Law contact points convened several meetings in 2024. These meetings provided a platform to assess national developments, report on significant concerns, and strengthen the contributions of national Bars and Law Societies to the CCBE's draft input for the European Commission's RoL Report.

OVERVIEW OF PROJECTS IN 2024

CCBE Projects

BREULAW



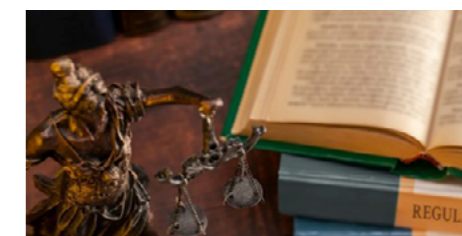
BREULAW (the short name for “Development of a lawyer’s training curriculum in EU law and study visits to EU institutions in Brussels”) was a project co-funded by the EU and run by a consortium composed of the European Lawyers Foundation (ELF) and the CCBE. The project started on 1 February 2023, extended for a period of 24 months, and finished in November 2024.

As the result of the BREULAW project, the ELF and the CCBE have produced a [Lawyers' training curriculum in EU law](#). This curriculum is unique and highly valuable to EU Bars, Law societies, and institutions that train EU lawyers due to its specific features. It is tailored to the needs of practising lawyers in their daily work rather than being purely academic. Its focus is on practical and procedural aspects of EU law that are not widely taught and where gaps in legal education exist. In addition to a strong emphasis on remedies and procedures, it covers various EU-wide registries, such as those for business, insolvency, and land, and includes a dedicated section on EU law specifically applicable to lawyers. While primarily designed for initial or qualifying legal training, it can also be adapted for continuing legal education. Moreover, it incorporates numerous practical guides from authoritative European bodies, including the CCBE, the EU (via the e-Justice portal), the Council of Europe, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), and the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). Copies of the curriculum, available in English and French, as well as a [promotional leaflet](#), can be obtained at ccbe.eu and elf-fae.eu.

Additionally, two study visits to the EU institutions in Brussels were organized. More than 45 lawyers from different EU Member States had the opportunity to gain first-hand insight into the work of the EU institutions and received a presentation on the activities of the CCBE.

Learn more about the origins of the BREULAW project [here](#).

TRAVAR



The TRAVAR (the short name for "Training for lawyers in various areas of EU law") project was developed in response to the European Commission's strategy Ensuring Justice in the EU – A European Judicial Training Strategy for 2021–2024, which aims to strengthen the implementation of EU law through the training of legal professionals. This strategy plays a key role in ensuring the effective application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and making its provisions a reality in daily life. Given their role as regulators of the legal profession across Member States, Bars and Law Societies are uniquely positioned to support the EU's objectives in legal training, to provide their insights on the specific training needs of lawyers in the most relevant areas of EU law and ensuring a direct impact on citizens, businesses, and the rule of law.

The TRAVAR project is the result of a collaboration between the European Lawyers Foundation (ELF), the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), and several EU Bars. It focuses on training lawyers in two critical areas: the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and EU criminal law. The project is built on a thorough assessment of lawyers' evolving training needs, covering both well-established areas such as EU criminal law and emerging topics like the Unified Patent Court. It also takes into account the preferred training formats, offering both online and in-person sessions to accommodate different professional requirements.

Under TRAVAR, 2,000 lawyers from 26 EU Member States will receive training on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights through eight webinars addressing topics such as artificial intelligence, intellectual property, digitalisation, climate change, and the preliminary reference procedure before the Court of Justice of the European Union. Additionally, 205 lawyers from nine EU Member States will participate in seven in-person events on EU criminal law, held in Spain, Greece, Cyprus, Hungary, France, Romania, and Poland. These sessions, lasting 1.5 days each, will cover essential topics, including the right of access to a lawyer, presumption of innocence, legal aid, and best practices in applying procedural rights directives and the European Arrest Warrant.

The project will also publish an updated version of the Infosheets on the national implementation of the procedural rights directives, covering nine EU jurisdictions. Communication efforts will ensure broad participation in training activities and keep EU Bars and lawyers informed about the project's progress. By enhancing legal professionals' expertise in EU law, TRAVAR contributes to the EU's goal of ensuring that 15% of lawyers receive EU law training by 2024. The project primarily targets lawyers, but EU Bars and other legal professionals will also benefit from its communication and dissemination efforts.

Who's Who

— Presidency



Pierre-Dominique Schupp
President



Thierry Wickers
First Vice-President

Roman Završek
Second Vice-President

Alex Tallon
Third Vice-President

Committees & Working Groups Chairs



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Migration



Antigoni Alexandropoulou
Company Law



Éric Balate
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Aldo Bulgarelli
Quality



Herman Buyssens
Insurance



Claudio Cocuzza
Anti-Money Laundering



Sebastian Cording
Surveillance



Beatrice Deshayes
European Private Law



Achilleas Demetriades
Permanent Delegation
to the European Court of
Human Rights (PD STRAS)



Carlo Forte
International Legal Services



Anne Birgitte
Gammeljord
Statutes Review



Jean-Marc Gollier
Environment and Climate
Change



Klavdija Kerin
Platform for Exchange,
Cooperation and
Outreach (PECO)



Nikolaos Koutkias
Training



Ondrej Laciak
Criminal Law



Christian Lemke
Future of the Legal Profession
and Legal Services



Élodie Mulon
Family and
Succession Law



Jiří Novák
IT Law



Laurent Petitti
European Convention



Przemysław Kamil Rosiak
Permanent Delegation to
the Court of Justice and the
General Court and the EFTA
Court (PD LUX)



Elisabeth Scheuba
Access to Justice



Claudia Seibel
Finance



Ina-Mari Supperi
Young Lawyers



Silvia Sparfeld
Tax



Stefan Von Raumer
Human Rights



Joanna Wisła-Płonka
EU Lawyers

Secretariat



Simone Cuomo
Secretary-General

Administration



Véronique Jamart
Head of Finance
and Human Resources

Orienne Van der Linden
Administrative Assistant

Alexandre Mahé
Translator

Communication



Antonella Verde
Head of Finance and
Human Resources
(ad interim)

Karine Métayer
Head of Communication

Céline Ségure
Digital Communications
Officer

Public Affairs



Peter McNamee
Head of Public Affairs and
Senior Legal Advisor

Legal Advisors



Stéphanie Alves-Schuldt
Senior Legal Advisor

Indra Bule
Senior Legal Advisor

Anna Drozd
Senior Legal Advisor



Nathan Roosbeek
Legal Advisor

Anna Smolińska
Senior Legal Advisor

Yvonne Goettler
Communication and
Legal Advisor