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The aim of the CEPEJ is to contribute to improving the quality of justice and the efficiency of its functioning in the 47 Member States of the Council of Europe.

Tribute to Fausto de Santis



The Secretariat of the CEPEJ, the CEPEJ members, the national correspondents, the representatives of the Network of Pilot courts and all associated people to the CEPEJ express their deep sadness following the death of its former President, Mr Fausto de Santis, on 9 March 2012.

File: Coaching programmes for European courts

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For the past ten years the CEPEJ has developed tools in line with the reality of the functioning of courts. Working with justice professionals within its working groups and its network of pilot courts, the CEPEJ seeks to provide judges, prosecutors, lawyers, court clerks, as well as policy makers, practical and pragmatic means to facilitate their daily lives and thus improve the efficiency and quality for the public service in the justice field. Concerned that the tools it develops will not see light, the CEPEJ has opted to be the principal promoter as regards its achievements towards its beneficiaries.

Two court coaching programmes have been set up: one is to assist the courts in the enforcement of [guidelines](#) and other tools aimed to manage judicial time, thereby ensuring greater foreseeability and optimisation of procedural timeframes. The second allows the courts, from a [handbook prepared by the CEPEJ](#), to organise user satisfaction surveys. The results of these investigations will provide court managers with solutions to orientate the organisation of the work of the jurisdictions according to how this service is perceived by the community. Through these programmes, CEPEJ experts are available to the courts who request to meet their staff and discuss with them the use of these tools.

To date, twenty courts have benefited from these

programmes, which might be further extended across Europe. Europe of law and justice is built primarily through co-operation between men and women who agree to pool their experience, expertise and willingness to innovate and move! We welcome you to take advantage of these programmes!

Stéphane Leyenberger
Secretary of the CEPEJ

File: Court coaching programmes - Statements from the trainers and the courts

Germany : Regional Court of Freiburg - Training to the use of the tools for judicial time management developed by the SATURN Centre



"The CEPEJ contributes to the improvement of lengths of procedures in Europe", by Jacques Bühler, Deputy Secretary General - Swiss Federal Court, President of the CEPEJ SATURN steering Group for the management of judicial timeframes and CEPEJ member

By using the SATURN tools for judicial time management developed by the CEPEJ, every court wishing to reduce the length of case management, can easily make an assessment of its own situation and launch projects in view of accelerating the processing of cases. Such courts if they so wish can benefit from the support of a CEPEJ expert.

1. Fifteen points of the SATURN Guidelines

The [SATURN guidelines for judicial time management](#) are part of the 'toolkit' enabling Courts to process the cases which are submitted them within a reasonable time. The SATURN Centre has put an emphasis on fifteen points of the Guidelines that courts may apply on their own, without having to request additional resources. These points have also been selected because they allow a quick improvement of the length of proceedings of the cases before a court. They may be summarised as follows:

- a) Collecting data allowing to measure the time needed to process cases, to identify the main steps of the procedure and thus to detect possible periods of inactivity.
- b) Setting objectives related to the length of proceedings in a case.
- c) Continuous analysis of the length of proceedings in pending cases and taking urgent measures when the risk of excessive delay arises.
- d) Conclusion of agreements with parties or their representatives regarding the calendar of case processing, followed by a strict respect, imposed by the judge, of the calendar and procedural steps agreed.

([Link to the complete article](#))

Jacques Bühler
Deputy Secretary General - Swiss Federal Court
President of the CEPEJ SATURN steering Group for the
management of judicial timeframes

Coaching session of the Landgericht Freiburg, by Jürgen Adam, Landgericht Freiburg, (Germany)

A coaching session regarding length of proceedings was held at the Landgericht (District Court) of Freiburg im Breisgau (Germany) on 20 April 2012. In advance, it had been agreed to focus solely upon civil litigations in first instance.

The coach, Mr Jacques Bühler, first introduced the SATURN tools for judicial time management to several members of the Landgericht. He also presented an analysis and evaluation of the length of proceedings at the Landgericht. In the discussion that followed, it was soon agreed that from a purely statistical point of view, length of proceedings does not seem to pose a great problem at the Landgericht, as the average length of proceedings is less than eight months and as the court has during the last years constantly managed to finish a number of cases roughly equal to the number of newly reinstated proceedings.

The members of the Landgericht then pointed out that nevertheless, length of proceedings might be a problem in certain „complex cases“, especially malpractice suits against physicians, tax counsellors and lawyers or suits arising from construction contracts. These complex cases account for up to 1/3 of a typical judge's caseload. During the discussion, two factors responsible for delays in the proceedings have quickly be identified: difficulties in finding (and dealing with) experts, and losses of know-how due to changes in the person of the judge. The participants of the coaching session then went on to discuss especially the second aspect in greater detail. Members of the Landgericht explained that due to usual career paths in the judiciary, there is a high degree of fluctuation among the judges. There are no regulations or even best practices regarding the process of a case being handed over to a new judge. Usually, no transfer of knowledge is taking place - with the effect that in many cases, the new judge working his or her way through the file will have to repeat much of the judicial work already done (but not documented) by the predecessor. Mr Bühler expressed that it might be an interesting task for CEPEJ to conduct an enquiry regarding the process of knowledge transfer in different countries. In the end, it was agreed to ask CEPEJ to conduct such a study and to have the subject discussed at the next pilot court meeting.

[\(Link to the complete article\)](#)

Jürgen Adam,
Landgericht Freiburg (Germany)



Romania: Vrancea Court, Focsani - Training to court user satisfaction surveys (December 2011)

By Giacomo Oberto, Judge – Court of Turin (Italy), Deputy Secretary General - International Association of judges and member of the CEPEJ SATURN Centre steering group

On 8 and 9 December, 2011, I participated in a meeting aimed to assist the Court of Vrancea (Focsani – Romania) in applying the methodology for conducting satisfaction surveys among court users. Working documents were distributed to the participants prior to the meeting. The event started in the premises of the said Court. During the two days, I made presentations of the coaching programme and answered the questions raised by the participants. During these two days, the President of the Court, the Vice-President of the Court, several judges and clerks of the Court took the floor.

I introduced myself as Judge of the Court of Turin and Deputy Secretary of the International Association of Judges, and spent few words about my role as member of the "Groupe de pilotage" of the CEPEJ SATURN Centre of the CEPEJ over the past years. I then informed the assistance about the experience of the "[Customer Satisfaction Survey in Turin Courts](#)," as explained in a report, whose main features I illustrated during the meetings.

In this regard, I informed the participants that:

(a) The [Customer Satisfaction Survey in Turin Courts](#) belongs to the cooperative activities that the Turin First Instance Court (Tribunale di Torino) carried out in its capacity as a member of the Network of Pilot Courts of the CEPEJ. An article on this subject has also been published in the [previous CEPEJ Newsletter \(November 2011\)](#).

(b) The initiative draws its origin from the activities of the Working Group on the quality of justice of the CEPEJ (CEPEJ-GT-QUAL). This panel (also on the basis of previous experiences realized at the Court of Geneva) has recently edited a [Report on "Conducting Satisfaction Surveys of Court Users in Council of Europe Member States."](#)

(c) A [handbook](#), together with other documents which have been drafted by the same organ, contains also a "Model Questionnaire for Court Users," which can be used, with the appropriate adjustments, in each and every Judicial Office willing to test the level of satisfaction of people who, for any possible reason, contact such bodies.

[\(Link to the complete article\)](#)

Giacomo Oberto

Judge – Court of Turin (Italy)

Deputy Secretary General – International Association of Judges
Member of the Steering Group of the CEPEJ SATURN Centre

Georgia: 6 court user satisfaction surveys



By Leila Marshania,
Project Officer "Enhancing
the Capacity of the
Judicial System of
Georgia", Promotion of
Judicial Reform, Human
and Minority Rights in Georgia, Council of Europe

In Georgia, the court users satisfaction survey has been conducted in six first instance Courts by using the CEPEJ methodology (namely: City Courts of Georgia, namely: Tbilisi City Court, Zugdidi District Court, Gori District Court, Kutaisi City Court, Rustavi City Court, Batumi City Court).

After having been trained by professionals, the court staff is able to proceed, in presence of the said professionals, to conduct interviews with court users. The information collected during these interviews is then analysed by sociologists and statisticians.

The objective was that 2000 citizens who have had dealings with the courts should be interviewed face-to face with structured questionnaires for collecting quantitative data.

After having collected questionnaire responses, the results have been processed for reporting purposes. The method of counting allowed responses to be divided into the different user categories (age, gender, users involved in criminal, civil or administrative cases, etc).

The aim was also to analyze user satisfaction by taking into account, for each factor evaluated, both the replies relating to satisfaction and replies relating to importance (level of expectation) according to the rating scales. The priorities in terms of improvements to be made are determined by the items rated highest in terms of importance and lowest in terms

of satisfaction.

The results of court user survey conducted in 2010 have been used to assess changes in user satisfaction level.

Leila Marshania

Project Officer

Enhancing the Capacity of the Judicial System of Georgia
Promotion of Judicial Reform, Human and Minority Rights in
Georgia
Council of Europe

"Alongside with the judiciary reform, the judiciary power evaluates the changes made within the system through researches" by Lasha Kalandadze, Judge, Georgia, member of the CEPEJ Network of Pilot courts

During the last three years, the courts have been conducting user surveys several times a year with the resources allocated by international organisations or with local resources as well. Main goal of the surveys is to identify the attitude of population towards the judiciary through various parameters. In the surveys held for the last three years, the indicators of population attitude were: sensitive treatment by the court personnel, environment at courts, and timely performed services by the courts. According to all the parameters, about 80% of the all the respondents were satisfied with the court service.

One of the main directions of the judiciary reform is to ensure timely consideration of cases at court, to offer transparent and speedy administration of justice to the parties. According to the conducted research, the reform can be considered successful in this respect.

The surveys showed that the population's confidence is rising proportionately in parallel to the reforms carried out within the judiciary and according to the most recent survey held in 2011, the respective rate was 75% on average.

In May 2012, the judiciary power commissioned a new research of court service to the company in joint cooperation with the Denmark's program on promotion of judicial reform, human and minority rights.

It is noteworthy that the idea of conducting the court user satisfaction survey was based on the guidelines that were developed by the CEPEJ. The Supreme Court of Georgia having shared the idea of conducting a survey, the 2011 court users were interviewed at the courts of 6 big cities of Georgia by the selected company.

Considering the recommendations of the CEPEJ, those court users participated in the survey, which did not represent state bodies. Prosecutors, investigators and other representatives of law enforcement bodies did not participate in the research.

During the survey, the respondents were the persons who had come for the civil, criminal and administrative cases. 45% of the surveyed population had come to the court because of civil cases, 31% – for criminal cases, and 17% for the administrative litigations. 5% of the respondents had come to the court for obtaining various kinds of information.

Out of the respondents involved in the survey 44% were women and 56% were men.

The survey was conducted according to the questionnaire that was developed after taking into account the CEPEJ recommendations.

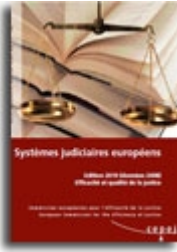
[\(Link to the complete article\)](#)

Lasha Kalandadze

Judge, Georgia

Member of the CEPEJ Network of pilot courts

Ongoing activities: what's new?



Evaluation of judicial systems

The new evaluation report on European judicial systems will be published on 20 September 2012, in the framework of the European Conference of Ministers of Justice (Austria).

► [More information](#)



Timeframes of proceedings

The SATURN Centre for judicial time management is aimed to become progressively a genuine European observatory of judicial timeframes. It refines the concrete tools serving to improve knowledge of the length of procedures by case category.

The implementation of the court coaching programmes to the use of SATURN tools on the management of timeframes is underway. It is provided by the CEPEJ members and experts. Each interested court is invited to contact Stephane.Leyenberger@coe.int.

► [More information](#)



Quality of Justice

The Working Group on Quality of Justice (CEPEJ-GT-QUAL) pursues its training programme for the organisation of court users satisfaction surveys. The voluntary courts can benefit from the support of CEPEJ experts for this purpose. They are invited to contact the Secretariat of the CEPEJ Stephane.Leyenberger@coe.int.

The definition of justice quality indicators as well as the preparation of guidelines on the main principles which should govern the reorganisation of judicial maps are also underway.

► [More information...](#)



Network of Pilot courts

The synthesis of the questionnaire "Which indicators for measuring the quality of justice?", which served as the basis of the implementation of an action plan in countries where deficiencies have been identified. On this same basis, civil, criminal and administrative case categories are subject to in-depth studies on the homogenous basis. The Network will hold its plenary meeting on 27 September 2012 in Malta.

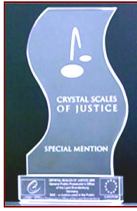
► [More information...](#)



2012 edition of the European Day of Justice

The main event of the 10th Edition of the European Day of Civil Justice will take place in Vilnius (Lithuania) in presence of the Minister of Justice of Lithuania, of representatives of the Council of Europe and of the European Commission. The programme will soon be available on the CEPEJ's website. Posters to be downloaded will be made available on the website for all Council of Europe member States. The courts involved in this initiative to bring justice closer to the citizen, to inform them on their rights and to promote the work of the European Commission and of the Council of Europe in the field of justice, for example through case simulations and information sessions, should send their programme to Annette.Sattel@coe.int.

► [More information...](#)



Crystal Scales of Justice

The call for applications to participate in the 6th Edition of the Crystal Scales of Justice has been launched in March 2012. The closing date for the introduction of applications is 30 June 2012. The Prize awarding ceremony for the selected projects of the Crystal Scales will take place in Vilnius (Lithuania), during the main event of the International Day of Justice, on 25 October 2012.

► [More information...](#)

2012-2013 CEPEJ activity programme

The CEPEJ activity programme adopted at the plenary meeting at the end of last year, focuses in particular, on the duty of evaluation of the functioning of European judicial systems and the effective implementation, in the courts, of the measures developed by the CEPEJ in the field of management of judicial timeframes and the promotion of the quality of the public services of justice.

► [2012-2013 CEPEJ activity programme](#)



Publications

To come... on 20 September 2012.... CEPEJ evaluation report on European judicial systems (2012 Edition, 2010 data)

► [Evaluation of European judicial systems](#)

Readers corner

You wish to react to an article published in this issue or suggest topics to be addressed in future editions ? Please send us your suggestions by e-mail to the following address: cepej@coe.int.

Forthcoming events

- [19th CEPEJ plenary meeting \(Strasbourg\)](#) 5+6 July 2012
- 12th meeting of the SATURN Steering group on the management of judicial timeframes (Malta) 26 + 28 September 2012
- 7th meeting of the Network of Pilot courts (Malta) 27 September 2012
- 20th Bureau meeting (Strasbourg) 10 October 2012
- [European Day of Civil Justice](#) 18+19 October 2012
- 12th meeting of the working group on Quality of justice (GT-QUAL) (Strasbourg) 15+16 November 2012
- 21th meeting of the working group on evaluation of justice (GT-EVAL) (Strasbourg) 6+7 December 2012
- 20th CEPEJ plenary meeting (Strasbourg)

