

Press Release

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Council of Europe: presentation of the report on the evaluation of European judicial systems

Strasbourg, 05.10.2006 – The Council of Europe's Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) will bring out its report on the evaluation of European judicial systems on Thursday 5 October at 2.30 pm during a press conference making the document public at the Council of Europe's Strasbourg headquarters (Palais de l'Europe, room 1) in the presence of the Director General of Legal Affairs of the Council of Europe, Guy De Vel, the Chair of the CEPEJ, Eberhard Desch (Ministry of Justice, Germany), and the Chair of the CEPEJ Working Group on the evaluation of judicial systems, Jean-Paul Jean (Magistrate, France).

The report, comprising data for 45 European states, provides the Council of Europe with a real snapshot of justice in Europe. This is a unique process in Europe. Collecting and analysing these essential data should enable decision-makers and the judicial community to understand the major trends in judicial organisation, pinpoint the difficulties and help implement reforms to improve the efficiency of justice.

The report gives a comparative description of public spending on the judicial system, the relationship between judicial systems and their users, and the organisation of courts and of judicial staff. The data collected show, for example, that the legal aid system seems very limited in certain member states considering that it is a requirement of the European Court of Human Rights. It is also noted that few member states have definite, accurate data on the duration of judicial proceedings, although failure to observe reasonable time is the principal argument in the cases brought before the Strasbourg Court. The study also shows that there are wide geographical disparities in Europe as regards measures to protect vulnerable persons.

An in-depth analysis of the report's findings will be made in the months ahead by the CEPEJ in order to offer the governments practical instruments for the development of policies in judicial matters. There will be regular reruns of the exercise allowing the measurement of progress as between member states and over time in single states.

To obtain further information, and the rapport and synopsis: www.coe.int/cepej.

There will be a live webcast of the press conference on the Council of Europe site: www.coe.int

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