



Strasbourg, 4 December 2024

CEPEJ(2024)11

EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR THE EFFICIENCY OF JUSTICE (CEPEJ)

43rd plenary meeting

3 and 4 December 2024

(Strasbourg, France)

Abridged report

A. FOREWORD

The European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) of the Council of Europe held its 43rd plenary meeting in Strasbourg (France) on 3 and 4 December 2024. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Francesco DEPASQUALE (Malta), the CEPEJ President.

The CEPEJ President recalled that the present meeting was preceded on December 2nd by the 3rd World Forum on Enforcement, co-organized by the CEPEJ and the International Union of Judicial Officers (UIHJ), on the topic "Artificial intelligence, human rights and enforcement of court decisions in civil and commercial matters: what guarantees for litigants?" and in which numerous CEPEJ members and observers participated. He praised the success of the event, as well as the good cooperation between UIHJ and the CEPEJ.

The plenary meeting started with a study session aimed to get participants thinking about the question: 'Does the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the judicial environment, increasingly regulated, still need to be subject to an ethical framework?'

Mr. Marek Świerczyński (Poland), Professor of Law, Member of the CEPEJ Artificial Intelligence Advisory Board (AIAB) moderated the Session, which was followed by a debate and included the following contributions:

- Ms. Stefanie Otte (Germany), Judge, President of the Appeal Court of Celle, spoke about "*The future of (civil) justice – what about automation ?*";
- Mr Édouard Rottier (France), Legal adviser, Deputy to the Director of the Documentation, Studies and Reports Department, Director of the Open data project, Head of the Case Law Dissemination and Open Data Unit at the Cour de Cassation, about "*What future of AI in judicial decision making?*";
- Ms. Kate Fox Principi, Head on the administration of justice, Rule of Law Section, UN Human Rights Committee about "*Beyond Europe - Human rights challenges and good practices of the application of digital technologies and AI in the administration of justice*".
- Mr. Kristian Bartholin, Secretary of the Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI) about "*Application of the CoE AI Framework Convention in the judicial domain*".

The agenda and the list of participants are appended.

B. LIST OF ITEMS DISCUSSED AND DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE CEPEJ

The CEPEJ:

1. Recent developments in the field of justice in the Member States and Observer States

- **took note** of the information provided by delegations of Albania, Belgium, Greece, Luxemburg, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Türkiye, Ukraine and by observer States (Israel, Kazakhstan and Morocco), as well as by an invited delegation from Algeria on developments in their countries since June 2024.

2. Evaluation of judicial systems (CEPEJ-GT-EVAL)

- **welcomed** the presentation of the main trends of the CEPEJ Evaluation report on “European judicial systems”, 2024 Evaluation cycle (2022 data) composed of three parts (General analyses – Country profiles – CEPEJ-STAT Database) and **noted with satisfaction** the excellent reception of the report by the Committee of Ministers and by the Ambassadors and Permanent Representations to the Council of Europe present at the publication event on 16 October;
- **took note** that specific studies based on the CEPEJ 2022 data will be prepared by the justice professionals enjoying observer status with the CEPEJ (Council of the Notariats of the European Union, International Union of Judicial Officers, European Expertise & Expert Institute) and submitted to the CEPEJ-GT-EVAL before their publication on the CEPEJ-STAT page;
- **welcomed** the proposals for an evolution of the evaluation cycles with the aim of simplifying and rationalising the evaluation cycles;
- **highlighted** the importance of the CEPEJ evaluation report as a unique source of objective, reliable and comparable data for the States and the need to maintain the quality and visibility of this report in the context of the envisaged evolution;
- **supported** the proposals presented with a view to setting up an annual data collection on the basis of a reduced questionnaire in order to make the most recent data available and also to lighten the workload of the CEPEJ's national correspondents; **encouraged** the States to ensure the availability of data in the context of this annual data collection;
- **entrusted the CEPEJ-GT-EVAL** to prepare the necessary documents for the implementation of this evolution, to keep the CEPEJ national correspondents informed throughout the reform process.
- **Decided** to launch the next evaluation process in autumn 2025, with a view to publishing the results at the end of 2026; **suggested** to develop a data collection system for the year 2024 which will be accessible to voluntary countries which do not collect data for the EU Justice Scoreboard, the Dashboards Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership in order to avoid a break in data collection;
- **entrusted the CEPEJ-GT-EVAL** to implement this development on the basis of the comments made during the meeting, in particular by developing country profiles containing an objective analysis of the judicial systems of each country as well as the key indicators and data of these judicial systems, to prepare a report containing european trends on a less regular basis and to continue to develop the CEPEJ-STAT database, by making it more user-friendly.

- **encouraged** delegations to contact the Secretariat with a view to organising peer reviews to support the collection and quality control of data for the next cycle;
- **welcomed** the continued cooperation with the European Commission, on the basis of the CEPEJ's own evaluation methodology, on: (i) an annual study on the functioning of the judicial systems in the EU member states including the transfer of certain data collected by the CEPEJ towards EUROSTAT; (ii) the annual evaluation of the functioning of the judicial systems in the beneficiaries of the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo*, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia); (iii) the annual evaluation of the functioning of judicial systems in the “Eastern Partnership” countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine), and **entrusted** the CEPEJ-GT-EVAL to continue this co-operation, which reinforces the pre-eminent role of the CEPEJ in the field of evaluation of justice, as well as the synergies between the European Union and the Council of Europe in this field.
- **Artificial Intelligence (Joint work CEPEJ-GT-QUAL/ CEPEJ-GT-CYBERJUST) took note** of the progress in the implementation of the pilot phase of the Assessment Tool of AI Systems in the Judicial Sector¹ which should ensure the appropriate follow-up of the CEPEJ European Ethical Charter on the use of artificial intelligence in judicial systems and their environment and the work of the CEPEJ Artificial Intelligence Advisory Board (AIAB) in this field;
- **welcomed** the developments of the Resource Centre on Cyberjustice and Artificial Intelligence, focusing not only on tools in judicial systems implemented by public entities and which contains 125 entries, and **invited** its members to inform the Secretariat of any new tools set up by the online form on the CEPEJ website.

4. Quality of justice (CEPEJ-GT-QUAL)

- **adopted** the Guidelines on evaluation of the quality of the work of judges²;
- **took note** of the work and discussions underway within the CEPEJ-GT-QUAL, notably on the quality of jurisdictional debate, access to justice, sustainability in the judicial systems and mediation.

5. Judicial time management (CEPEJ-SATURN)

- **adopted** the Time Management Checklist for public prosecution services³ and its Explanatory Note⁴;
- **welcomed** the setting up of the Resource Centre on backlog reduction practices that will be made public after the plenary session;
- **took note** of the other work in progress within the CEPEJ-SATURN, in particular on the case weightening on the analysis of the length of the steps of the civil proceedings as well as of the activities of the CEPEJ Pilot Courts Network which will hold its 18th annual meeting in Strasbourg on 10 April 2025.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

¹ CEPEJ-GT-QUAL(2024)1

² CEPEJ(2024)5

³ CEPEJ(2024)7

⁴ CEPEJ(2024)8

6. Cyberjustice and artificial intelligence (CEPEJ-GT-CYBERJUST)

- **adopted** the Guidelines for the online publication of judicial decisions aiming at furthering legal knowledge⁵;
- **adopted** the CEPEJ Cyberjustice and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Glossary⁶;
- **took note** of the work and discussions underway within the CEPEJ-GT-CYBERJUST, notably the addendum to the Guidelines on videoconferencing in judicial proceedings.

7. Cooperation activities of the CEPEJ

- **took note** of the ongoing activities, achievements, and next steps of the cooperation programmes presented in the synthesized document⁷ and **thanked** the project coordinators and the project managers concerning Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo*, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and the South Programme V for their thematic presentations during the review of the work of the various CEPEJ Working Groups;
- **welcomed** the new cooperation programmes with Greece and Morocco.

8. Election of the CEPEJ Bureau

- **re-elected** Francesco DEPASQUALE (Malta) as President and Ivan CRNČEC (Croatia) as Vice-President of the CEPEJ as well as Sonya DJEMNI-WAGNER (France) and Seçkin KOÇER (Türkiye) as members of the Bureau for a period of two years.

9. Observers

- **took note** of the information provided by the observers, namely the Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE), the European Association of Judges (AEM-AJ), the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN), the European Network of Councils for the Judiciary (ENCJ), the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the European Union of Rechtspfleger (EUR), the International Union of Judicial Officers (UIHJ), the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), as well as European Expertise and Expert Institute (EEEI).

10. Other items

- **took note** that the 44th plenary meeting of the CEPEJ will be held on 4-5 June 2025, in Strasbourg;
- **took note** that all the dates of the many other CEPEJ meetings are shown on the calendar on the CEPEJ website.

⁵ CEPEJ(2024)9

⁶ CEPEJ(2024)10

⁷ CEPEJ-COOP(2024)2

Agenda

Documents preceded by the sign ☒ are submitted for examination by the CEPEJ in view of their adoption.

The order of business can be different than the order of the items in the agenda

The working documents will be available, in restricted access, on the CEPEJ collaborative workspace which is regularly updated. You can access this space by logging in with your email address and the password you have been given. If you encounter any problem of access or for any other information, please contact: sara.radovicka@coe.int

1	Opening of the meeting	Adoption of the agenda and other information	Agenda of the 43 rd CEPEJ plenary meeting
2	Workshop Session (9:45-11:30)	<p>“Does the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the increasingly regulated judicial environment still require an ethical framework?”</p> <p>☒ <i>Moderator: Marek Świerczyński (Poland), Professor of law, Member of the CEPEJ Artificial Intelligence Advisory Board (AIAB)</i></p> <p>☒ <i>The future of (Civil) Justice – What about automation? Stefanie Otte (Germany), Judge, President Appeal Court of Celle,</i></p> <p>☒ <i>What future of AI in judicial decision making? Édouard Rottier, (France) Legal adviser, Deputy to the Director of the Documentation, Studies and Reports Department, Director of the Open data project, Head of the Case Law Dissemination and Open Data Unit, Cour de Cassation, France</i></p> <p>☒ <i>Application of the Council of Europe AI Framework Convention in the judicial domain Kristian Bartholin, Secretary of the Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI), Head of the Digital Development Unit, Council of Europe</i></p> <p>☒ <i>Beyond Europe - Human rights challenges and good practices of the application of digital</i></p>	

technologies and AI in the administration of justice
Kate Fox Principi, Lead on the administration of justice, Rule of Law Section, UN Human Rights Committee

<p>3 Recent Developments in the Field of Justice in Member States and Observer States</p>	<p>Delegations are invited to inform the CEPEJ of significant developments in their country since June 2024</p>	
<p>4 Evaluation of judicial systems (CEPEJ-GT-EVAL)</p>	<p>Presentation of the ongoing work by Jaša VRABEC (Slovenia), President of the CEPEJ-GT-EVAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CEPEJ Evaluation report - European judicial systems, 2024 cycle (2022 data) and specific studies on professional - Presentation of the evolutions envisaged for the 2026 cycle and ongoing reflexions on the creation of new efficiency and quality indicators - Support to national correspondents and peer review - Cooperation with the European Union <p>Study on the functioning of judicial systems in the member States of the European Union (EU Justice Scoreboard) and continuation of this cooperation.</p> <p>Transmisison of data in the view of their publication on Eurostat.</p> <p>Dashboard Western Balkans.</p> <p>Justice Dashboard Eap (Eastern Partnership countries)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperation activities in the field of evaluation of judicial systems (presented by project managers) 	<p>Working documents</p> <p>Note on the evolution of evaluation cycles CEPEJ-GT-EVAL(2024)28REV</p> <p>Background documents</p> <p>European judicial systems - CEPEJ Evaluation Report - Evaluation cycle 2024 (2022 data)</p> <p>Methodology for the calculation of the CEPEJ ICT indices CEPEJ-GT-EVAL(2024)20</p> <p>47th meeting report of the CEPEJ-GT-EVAL CEPEJ-GT-EVAL(2024)31</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CEPEJ Study for the European Union Justice Scoreboard - Dashboard Western Balkans - Dashboard Eastern Partnership

5	Joint work on artificial intelligence (AI) (CEPEJ-GT-QUAL/CEPEJ-GT-CYBERJUST)	Presentation of the ongoing work by Maria Giuliana CIVININI (Italy) President of the CEPEJ-GT-CYBERJUST and João Arsenio De OLIVEIRA (Portugal), President of the CEPEJ-GT-QUAL	<p>Background documents</p> <p>Report of the 8th AIAB meeting</p> <p>Link to the Resource Centre on Cyberjustice and AI</p> <p>Note on the Implementation of a Pilot Phase for the Assessment Tool of AI Systems in the Judicial Sector CEPEJ-GT-QUAL(2024)1</p>
6	Quality of justice (CEPEJ-GT-QUAL)	<p>Presentation of the ongoing work by João Arsenio De OLIVEIRA (Portugal), President of the CEPEJ-GT-QUAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Qualitative Evaluation of Judges' Work ✚ Quality of Judicial Debate ✚ Access to justice Sustainability within courts and judicial administration ✚ Revision of the satisfaction surveys methodology ✚ Translation and interpretation in judicial proceedings ✚ The place of children in mediation ✚ Cooperation activities in the field of quality of justice (presented by project managers) 	<p>Working documents</p> <p>☐ Draft Guidelines on evaluation of the quality of the work of judges CEPEJ(2024)5</p> <p>Background document</p> <p>37th meeting report of the CEPEJ-GT-QUAL CEPEJ-GT-QUAL(2024)7</p>
7	Judicial time management (CEPEJ-SATURN)	<p>Presentation of the ongoing work by Giacomo OBERTO (Italy), President of the CEPEJ-SATURN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Time Management Checklist for public prosecution services ✚ Database of backlog reduction practices (presentation of the prototype of the database) ✚ Case-weighting tool 	<p>Working documents</p> <p>☐ Draft Time Management Checklist for public prosecution services CEPEJ(2024)7</p> <p>☐ Draft Explanatory Note for the Time Management Checklist for public prosecution services</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Study on workload measurement in judicial systems ✚ Tool to analyse the timeframes according to the steps of the civil procedure ✚ Meeting of the Network of pilot courts of the CEPEJ ✚ Tool on effective court management ✚ Cooperation activities in the field of judicial time management (presented by project managers) 	<p>CEPEJ(2024)8</p> <p>Background documents</p> <p>Report of the 37th meeting of CEPEJ-SATURN CEPEJ-SATURN(2024)26</p>
8	Cyberjustice and artificial intelligence (CEPEJ-GT-CYBERJUST)	<p>Presentation of the ongoing work by Maria-Giuliana CIVININI (Italy), President of the CEPEJ-GT-CYBERJUST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Draft Guidelines on online publication of case-law and legal knowledge access ✚ Review of the Guidelines on videoconferencing in judicial proceedings ✚ Glossary of Technology terms for judicial professionals ✚ Cooperation activities in the field of cyberjustice (presented by project managers) 	<p>Working documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Draft Guidelines for the online publication of court decisions and access to legal knowledge (CEPEJ (2024)9) □ Draft CEPEJ Cyberjustice and AI glossary (CEPEJ (2024)10) <p>Background documents</p> <p>Report of the 11th meeting CEPEJ-GT-CYBEJUST</p>
9	Transversal work for all working groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Improvement of work-life balance in judiciary ✚ Study on potential effects of the use of AI tools on efficiency and quality of justice 	<p>Working documents</p> <p>Concept note on improving work-life balance in the judiciary CEPEJ(2024)3</p> <p>Concept note on Artificial Intelligence and the efficiency of justice CEPEJ(2024)4</p>
10	Cooperation activities of the CEPEJ	Other activities than those presented during the work presentations under points 3 to 7	<p>Working document</p> <p>State of implementation of CEPEJ cooperation programmes CEPEJ-COOP(2024)2</p>

11	Elections - Bureau of the CEPEJ for 2025 and 2026	<p>The outgoing President, Francesco DEPASQUALE (Malta), has reached the end of his mandate. He can be re-elected for a period of 2 years.</p> <p>The outgoing Vice President, Ivan CRNČEC (Croatia), has reached the end of his mandate. He can be re-elected for a period of 2 years.</p> <p>The member of the Bureau, Sonya DJEMNI-WAGNER (France), has reached the end of his mandate. She can be re-elected for a period of 2 years.</p> <p>The member of the Bureau, Seçkin KOÇER (Türkiye), reaches the end of his mandate; He can be re-elected for a period of 2 years..</p> <p>Applications for the different positions of the Bureau can be sent to the Secretariat from now until December 3, 2022, 12:00.</p>
12	Crystal scales of justice prize	Launching of the 2025 Edition of the Crystal Scales of Justice
13	Observers	<p>Observers to the CEPEJ have the possibility to make an oral presentation of their current activities of interest to the CEPEJ and/or to submit written information to the Secretariat, which will share it during the meeting.</p>
14	Other items	<p>✚ Relations between the CEPEJ and other bodies</p> <p>✚ 2025 Meeting Calendar</p>

INFORMATION DOCUMENTS

Abridged report of the 42nd plenary meeting of the CEPEJ

2024 – 2025 Activity Programme of the CEPEJ

2022 – 2025 Action plan of the CEPEJ
“Digitalization for a better justice”

APPENDIX II

List of Participants

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