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CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL OF EUROPEAN JUDGES (CCJE)

CONSEIL CONSULTATIF DE JUGES EUROPÉENS (CCJE)

**Compilation of responses to the questionnaire
for the preparation of the CCJE Opinion No. 28 (2025)
on judicial well-being**

***Compilation des réponses au questionnaire
en vue de la préparation de l'Avis No. 28 (2025) du CCJE
sur le bien-être des juges***

Prepared by the CCJE Secretariat

Préparée par le Secrétariat du CCJE

Contents

Albania / Albanie	3
Austria / Autriche.....	6
Belgium / Belgique	10
Bosnia and Herzegovina / Bosnie-Herzégovine	18
Bulgaria / Bulgarie.....	21
Croatia / Croatie.....	25
Cyprus / Chypre	29
Denmark / Danemark	40
Estonia / Estonie	43
Finland / Finlande	46
France	51
Germany / Allemagne	55
Hungary / Hongrie.....	60
Iceland / Islande.....	67
Ireland / Irlande	71
Italy / Italie.....	75
Latvia / Lettonie.....	99
Liechtenstein.....	103
Luxembourg.....	108
Malta / Malte	111
Republic of Moldova / République de Moldova.....	116
Poland / Pologne.....	120
Romania / Roumanie	127
Netherlands / Pays-Bas	140
Norway / Norvège	144
Portugal	147
San Marino / Saint-Marin	165
Slovenia / Slovénie	170
Spain / Espagne.....	175
Sweden / Suède.....	180
Switzerland / Suisse.....	183
Türkiye.....	184
Ukraine	192
United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni	197

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

Judges' judicial well-being is not recognised as an important issue, neither a contributing factor to the judiciary effectiveness.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

There is no initiative, discussion or any similar policy on this topic. There have been only two activities held in 2020 on Judicial Resilience organised by USAID funded Justice for All Project.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

Being a judge is a noble mission. Judges role in upholding the rule of law and contributing to the social order in society, and helping people enjoy their rights is rewarding. The autonomy and independence in decision making are two important factor contributing to the well-being.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

Excessive workload associated with pressure and continued public criticism and lack of trust, ethical dilemmas, long working hours, limited work – life balance, etc.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

To the highest level. Judges fear appearing weak and undervalue the importance of the mental health.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

Yes, there are cases that often place significant emotional, intellectual, and ethical pressures on judges, which can increase their vulnerability to stress and burnout. Criminal cases, family cases, high profile or politically sensitive cases, etc.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

Yes, judges in family and criminal courts often deal with emotionally charged cases involving difficult personal circumstances, which can be mentally and emotionally draining. Senior or junior judges respectively face different challenges, which similarly impact their wellbeing. Personal factors, like age, family life, health might impact too.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

Time management strategies, less stressful work routines, peer support and networking, physical workout, meditation (few minutes breathing techniques), mentorship, etc.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

No, there is no such measure. Only limited donor driven initiatives used to address this concern.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

No information the training details.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

There is no initiative

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

Not sufficient

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

There is no initiative

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

Judicial well-being programs could provide structured support for judges dealing with stress, burnout, and mental health issues. These programs can offer confidential counseling services, peer support, and stress management resources that are specifically designed for the unique challenges judges face.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

No, there is no similar strategy. However, there is a vital need to ensure better coordination between the High Judicial Council and the School of Magistrates, to incorporate in the continuous training similar topics.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

Cultural resistance, financial constraints, lack of understanding on the well-being importance, lack of trust on the confidentiality of judges' data

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

At the individual level, the challenges to judicial well-being stem largely from personal resistance, cultural norms, time constraints, and a lack of awareness of the importance of self-care.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

Create Designated 'Wellness Time' for Judges, self-awareness, creating a supportive culture, offering tailored well-being programs, and reducing barriers to seeking help, judges can be empowered to manage their stress and maintain their health.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

NO

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

No. The traditional approach of Austrian judiciary has focused on the 'well-being' or well-functioning of the system as a whole, assuming and requiring the well-functioning of the individual judge.

In recent years, the ordinary judiciary as an employer has endeavoured to improve the framework conditions for all employees (including judges) by offering occupational health care.

This includes health seminars (eye training, back training, anti-stress-training etc.).

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

No. The process of raising the awareness for individual well-being is necessary.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

The judicial work is diverse, varied and meaningful. You have a responsibility to the rule of law and to society.

You can change your field of work.

You can work independently (given that these are constitutional guarantees).

You have no fixed working hours.

You can create a constructive working atmosphere and try to show the parties solutions and ways to find solutions. A decision can also create legal peace.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

It might start at the beginning of the career, but reappears also during promotions: the process of application, hearing of applicants, selection and proposition for appointment often needs more transparency in the administrative judiciary, especially for top positions.

While judges in the ordinary judiciary enjoy a profound preparation for their future task as trainee-judges, administrative judges don't have a comparable preparation; training for specific judicial task is done 'on the job' and might stress at the beginning.

Generally speaking:

The workload is too heavy. There is a shortage of at least 200 judges in the civil and criminal courts alone - a shortage acknowledged by the Ministry of Justice.

There is also a shortage of judges in the administrative courts, the courts of appeal and the Supreme Court.

The number of cases is increasing and the cases tend to be more complex.

There are additional tasks for the courts.

There is little support by non-judicial staff. It is only recently that the civil and criminal courts have begun to deploy legal staff. So far, there are only a handful.

A purely deficit-oriented management of the administration of courts that is far too numbers-driven has a serious impact.

No support whatsoever for the conduct of hearings. There are no court staff at the hearing. The judges literally have to do everything themselves (call to order, dictate, print out, ventilate, etc.).

Last but not least: due to the lack of an independent council for the judiciary, the administration of the judiciaries is executed under the direction of heads of the executive branch (federal ministers and governments of the regions), including the strict supervision of the functioning of the judiciary ('Justizaufsicht') as a whole and the work (output) of individual judges. The self-responsibility of judges for their work is restricted on minor questions, the feeling prevails, that politicians care more for the system than for the individual.

Initiatives to defend independence or to demand improvements are left to judges and their associations (NGOs)

5. **To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?**

As mentioned above, the traditional approach of Austrian judiciary has focused on the 'well-being' or well-functioning of the system as a whole, simply assuming and requiring the well-functioning of the individual judge as given.

The awareness that you need to look after yourself and your health (including your mental health) has increased.

In this area, there are certainly training programmes offered by the employer, e.g. seminars on topics such as 'Activities for body and mind, improving physical fitness and mental regeneration'.

It is a question of resources and the courts are often given very short shrift by politicians.

6. **Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?**

There are colleagues who feel more pressure in the first instance - in areas where there are a lot of court hearings.

But that depends a lot on the personal characteristics of the judge.

Family law is certainly a particularly challenging area. But here, too, different personalities probably deal with it individually. So in our opinion the 'case types' are only of secondary importance for stress.

High-profile cases, cases of high complexity and very lengthy proceedings are often perceived as burdensome, as the management and the final ‘success’ of a proceeding is left to the individual judge.

Sometimes, a single sitting judge or a small panel of them faces an ‘armada’ of specialized attorneys and advisors including expert-witnesses, who have manifold more resources to prepare and to fight for their position.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

@ seniority: seniority as a criterion for management of personnel might on the one hand be predictable and foreseeable, but must not exclude other criteria such as qualification and capacity (otherwise it would be frustrating)

@ experience: different to the pure number of closed files which can easily be counted as a criterion, experience is difficult to assess and might be undervalued. Especially in the present period of high numbers of retirements, the transfer of experience and other soft skills to the next generation of judges is in question.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

You should find a good work-life balance. Do also something good for yourself. You should also be able to switch off mentally. Generally it is wise to pay attention to your own needs.

You should lead a balanced life and also be active in music/culture and sport.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

No, as it is difficult to assess and to count in statistics.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

Yes, training programmes in the ordinary judiciary have a lot to offer. There are also some very good offers as part of the so-called “health care programme”.

Some of these training courses are organised at individual courts or at higher-level units. But there are also small groups (supervision).

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

No specific observation

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

No.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.
- No.**

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?
- 1. Firstly, sufficient human resources must be made available.**
2. then the judges must be guaranteed sufficient (technical and organisational) support, especially as the complexity of cases and the demands on judges (keyword: communication, AI) increase.
3. provide regular supervision and coaching (on a voluntary basis)
4. last but not least: the independence of judges and judiciaries must be effectively, visibly and credibly protected by independent institutions
15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?
- There is a wide range of training programmes and individual coaching offers also available. The high workload means that this offer can't always be accepted.**
There are also - regionally different - buddy and mentoring projects.
16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?
- There are already considerable resource problems. As mentioned, there is a shortage of at least 200 judges throughout Austria.**
The development and implementation in the administrative judiciary is split between bodies and differs quite a lot.
In addition, there is the threat of massive savings across the country as a whole because the budget needs to be reorganised.
17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?
- In Austria, the administration of courts is organised on a monocratic basis, without any kind of high council for the judiciary. There are also considerable regional differences. Some court presidents are more open to new strategies than others.**
18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?
- No.**
19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?
- No.**

Belgium / Belgique

I. Reconnaître l'importance du bien-être des juges et son impact sur l'efficacité des pouvoirs judiciaires

1. Le bien-être des juges est-il reconnu comme une question importante et un facteur contribuant à l'efficacité du pouvoir judiciaire dans votre pays ? Si oui, comment cela se fait-il et à quel niveau ?

Il existe, en Belgique, depuis plusieurs années, une préoccupation ou une attention générale des autorités pour la problématique du bien-être psychologique des juges (et procureurs), aux niveaux suivants :

- au niveau du Service public fédéral Justice (Service public fédéral Justice=Ministère de la Justice) : en octobre 2011, la Commission de modernisation de l'Ordre judiciaire a consacré un Rapport sur la charge psychosociale au sein de l'Ordre judiciaire¹ ; la Commission a constaté que les magistrats étaient confrontés à une lourde charge psychologique lorsqu'ils devaient traiter des dossiers difficiles, comme des catastrophes dues à une erreur humaine ou des affaires criminelles particulièrement effrayantes. La Commission a examiné l'aide psychosociale disponible et a constaté qu'elle était quasiment inexistante, malgré l'obligation légale générale en vigueur pour l'ensemble des travailleurs (extérieurs ou non à la Justice) depuis 1996. La Commission a constaté qu'il existait quelques initiatives, telles que des personnes de confiance et un service interne de prévention, mais qu'elles étaient insuffisamment connues et inadaptées. Selon la Commission, les magistrats n'ont d'autres recours que de devoir gérer leur stress en parlant avec des collègues. La commission a plaidé pour un plan en trois étapes : une analyse de la charge psychosociale, des formations préventives et une solution structurelle combinant aide interne et externe. Malgré les contraintes budgétaires, une action urgente était nécessaire, selon la Commission, pour garantir le bien-être des magistrats ;

- bien plus récemment, durant l'année 2024, le Service public fédéral Justice (Direction de l'Ordre judiciaire, Service Bien-être Ordre judiciaire) a réalisé le projet "Wellbeing Scan", c'est-à-dire une enquête générale sur divers aspects du bien-être psychosocial, à travers une série de questions adressées à chaque membre du personnel, juges et non-juges ; cette enquête avait pour but d'établir des plans d'actions spécifiques et adaptés aux besoins, afin d'améliorer le bien-être au travail des membres du personnel de la Justice, juges et non-juges ; les résultats de cette enquête ont été diffusés parmi tous les collaborateurs de l'Ordre judiciaire, juges et non-juges ; l'objectif est que les entités judiciaires travaillent sur les résultats du Wellbeing Scan, avec l'assistance de la cellule psychosociale du Service public fédéral Justice (Ministère de la Justice). Il a été annoncé fin décembre 2024 que le service précité élaborerait un plan global de prévention quinquennal, ainsi qu'un plan d'action annuel ;

- au niveau du parlement : l'Exposé des motifs de la loi du 12 mai 2024 portant statut social du magistrat entend rappeler qu'une justice performante requiert que ses acteurs puissent se développer et atteindre un bon équilibre entre le travail et la vie privée. Selon les auteurs du projet de loi, non seulement cela sera bénéfique pour le bien-être de chaque magistrat, mais cela renforcera en outre l'attractivité de la magistrature et attirera davantage de jeunes candidats ;

¹ http://cass.justitie.belgium.be/cmro-cmoj/doc/Charge_psychosociale-2011.pdf .

l'Exposé des motifs souligne encore que le projet de loi a l'ambition d'élaborer, pour la première fois dans la magistrature, un système de congés légaux qui vise à trouver un équilibre entre le bien-être de chaque magistrat et la continuité du service judiciaire public ; ainsi que les auteurs de la loi le soulignent eux-mêmes, le bien-être des magistrats n'est traité dans ce projet de loi « que » au travers du sujet des congés des magistrats (congés annuels de vacances, congé parental, congé d'adoption, congé de circonstance, exercice à temps partiel à partir de 57 ans, etc.). Les auteurs de cette loi exposent que le volet bien-être au travail proprement dit serait développé dans une phase ultérieure, c'est-à-dire dans un autre projet de loi qui, à ce jour, n'a pas encore été déposé. Il convient de reconnaître que cette loi du 12 mai 2024, entrée en vigueur le 1^{er} janvier 2025, est une avancée significative en faveur du bien-être au travail des juges et procureurs ; il faut toutefois observer que cette loi est limitée au volet « congés » du bien-être au travail et que rien n'y est prévu concernant l'assistance psychologique des juges ;

*- au niveau du Conseil supérieur de la Justice : si ce Conseil évalue, en priorité, les initiatives législatives au regard de leur utilité pour le justiciable, il ne perd pas de vue l'intérêt, pour le fonctionnement de l'ordre judiciaire, du bien-être des magistrats et les membres du personnel de l'ordre judiciaire ; dans son récent Mémoire de juin 2024 à l'attention du nouveau gouvernement fédéral, recommandation 13, le Conseil supérieur de la Justice recommande de « rendre la fonction de magistrat attractive, notamment en termes de conditions de travail (moyens matériels et humains), de statut social, d'un traitement revalorisé, d'avantages extralégaux et d'importance accordée **au bien-être au travail** » ;*

- au niveau du Conseil consultatif de la magistrature ; ce Conseil a pour mission légale de rendre des avis, soit de sa propre initiative, soit à la demande du ministre de la Justice ou des Chambres législatives, et de se concerter avec eux, sur tout ce qui a trait au statut, aux droits et conditions de travail des juges et officiers du ministère public. Le bien-être au travail est naturellement un des points d'attention importants du Conseil consultatif de la magistrature ; ce Conseil a joué un rôle important dans l'élaboration de la loi précitée du 12 mai 2024 portant statut social du magistrat, avec la Direction générale de la Législation du Service public fédéral Justice ;

- au niveau du gouvernement fédéral : l'accord de coalition fédérale 2025-2029 énonce : « Nous veillons également à la poursuite du déploiement du statut social mais en accordant une attention suffisante à la continuité de la justice afin de ne pas compromettre la prestation de services. »

- au niveau du Ministre de la Justice : dans son exposé d'orientation politique du 13 mars 2025, la nouvelle ministre de la Justice expose : « Être un employeur attractif, c'est aussi investir dans les conditions de travail de nos collaborateurs, par exemple en réduisant la charge de travail. C'est pourquoi nous poursuivrons sans relâche le renforcement de l'ordre judiciaire par le recrutement de magistrats et de personnel judiciaire supplémentaires afin que nos entités judiciaires puissent apporter une réponse appropriée aux phénomènes sociaux tels que le crime organisé et la criminalité liée à la drogue. ».

2. Pensez-vous que des mesures suffisantes sont prises pour soutenir et promouvoir le bien-être des juges dans votre pays, compte tenu de ses implications pour le bon fonctionnement du pouvoir judiciaire ?

La préoccupation générale, relatée dans la réponse à la précédente question, est assurément positive et mérite d'être soulignée. Elle n'a cependant pas encore trouvé d'écho sur le terrain, sur le plan de la prévention des risques psychosociaux auxquels les juges sont exposés dans leur vie professionnelle quotidienne, ou au niveau d'une aide concrète apportée aux magistrats

lorsqu'ils sont personnellement affectés par la réalisation d'un tel risque. Des progrès importants à ces égards restent à accomplir sur le terrain, pour dépasser le stade des bonnes intentions.

Il y a quelques années, le groupement de magistrats "Vakvereniging voor de magistratuur" a réalisé une analyse sur le bien-être des magistrats au travail. Les principales constatations de cette analyse sont les suivantes :

- l'absence d'une politique de bien-être pour les magistrats, y compris en matière de risques psychosociaux. Cette étude relevait aussi qu'aucune analyse des risques n'était disponible, qu'aucun plan global de prévention quinquennal n'avait été élaboré et qu'aucun plan d'action annuel digne de ce nom n'existait ; Remarque : ainsi qu'il a été indiqué dans la réponse à la précédente question, depuis cette étude, il a été annoncé, fin décembre 2024, que le Service public fédéral Justice élaborerait un plan global de prévention quinquennal ainsi qu'un plan d'action annuel ;*

- il y a un besoin de structuration claire de l'organisation, notamment par la définition d'une ligne hiérarchique responsable et redevable de l'élaboration et du respect de la politique de bien-être des magistrats. En outre, le groupement a constaté l'absence d'un modèle de concertation incluant des représentants de magistrats.*

II. Stress et bien-être des juges

3. Selon vous, quels sont les aspects positifs du travail judiciaire qui peuvent apporter satisfaction et bien-être aux juges ?

L' enquête précitée (=questionnaire à compléter en ligne) de 2024 sur le bien-être au travail, réalisée par la Cellule bien-être du Service public fédéral Justice (=Ministère de la Justice), à laquelle 37% des magistrats ont répondu, a donné les résultats suivants:

- i. Les magistrats ont des objectifs clairs, savent ce qui est attendu d'eux et peuvent donc appréhender avec pertinence leur travail et leurs responsabilités, évitant ainsi une perte de sens dans la réalisation de leur fonction.*
- ii. Ils ont une sécurité d'emploi importante*
- iii. Ils perçoivent leur travail comme intéressant et porteur de sens.*

De manière générale, l'auteur de la réponse au présent questionnaire croit pouvoir affirmer que la grande majorité des magistrats exercent leur profession par idéal et qu'ils ont un projet de vie habité par la volonté de « rendre » justice et le désir de se mettre au service de la communauté. Dans cet esprit, les juges consacrent à leur métier une partie substantielle de leur temps libre, en plus des heures de travail classiques, voire, dans de très nombreux cas, y consacrent la quasi-totalité de leur temps libre, sans respecter le temps de travail réglementaire de 38 heures/semaine (travail de soirée et de week-end).

L'auteur de la réponse au présent questionnaire croit aussi pouvoir écrire que beaucoup de juges, selon lui une majorité d'entre eux, sont heureux dans l'exercice de leur profession, même lorsqu'ils sont confrontés à des situations humaines pénibles ou qui présentent une lourde charge émotionnelle, comme par exemple dans les affaires familiales, de délinquance sexuelle, de terrorisme ou d'accidents mortels. Cependant, il est probable qu'un nombre significatif de juges soient confrontés, à un moment ou à un autre de leur carrière, à des difficultés psychologiques

plus ou moins graves qui ont un impact défavorable sur la qualité de leur travail ou sur leur « productivité ».

4. Selon vous, quelles sont les caractéristiques négatives du travail judiciaire qui peuvent être à l'origine du stress et de l'insatisfaction des juges ?

L'enquête précitée de 2024 (enquête du Service public fédéral Justice) a permis de découvrir, ou de confirmer, qu'un nombre significatif de juges étaient confrontés à de véritables difficultés :

- i. La charge de travail et la conciliation vie professionnelle et vie privée sont considérées comme fortement impactantes pour les juges.*
- ii. En plus d'une charge importante de travail, la charge émotionnelle du travail est également considérée comme importante.*
- iii. Les nouvelles exigences liées à la digitalisation exercent une pression supplémentaire sur le travail quotidien des juges ; cette pression est en lien avec le nombre croissant de logiciels et de canaux de communication ou avec les difficultés de déconnexion qui viennent ajouter un élément supplémentaire aux difficultés de gestion de l'équilibre entre la vie personnelle et le monde professionnel.*
- iv. Les exigences de qualité du travail des juges sont également un facteur important de pression sur le travail des juges. L'erreur n'est pas considérée comme tolérable, entraînant ainsi un fort impact sur les juges.*
- b. Les délais importants auxquels sont confrontés les dossiers influent fortement tant sur les processus de traitement des affaires que sur l'image du juge face au justiciable.*
- c. Le manque de moyens empêche d'exercer les actions de manière adéquate, ce qui génère de la frustration.*

5. Dans quelle mesure, selon vous, la stigmatisation du stress et des difficultés professionnelles des juges entrave-t-elle les efforts visant à favoriser le bien-être des juges ?

Le stress professionnel est, en effet, un sujet ambigu. D'une part, il est indéniable que le métier de juge est, en soi, particulièrement stressant (une ou plusieurs audiences par semaine, obligation de rédiger ses jugements dans des délais très stricts, difficulté des questions juridiques à trancher, charge émotionnelle liée aux rencontres avec les parties à la cause et aux plaidoiries des avocats, charge émotionnelle de la décision prise (« ai-je pris la bonne décision » ?), situations humainement pénibles (crimes horribles, souffrance des victimes, menaces des suspects, etc.). La résistance au stress (la « résilience ») est considérée comme une qualité nécessaire pour exercer le métier et il est, en effet, stigmatisant d'avouer qu'on est dépassé et surchargé.

6. Certains types d'affaires (par exemple, les domaines de la pratique juridique où les affaires sont sensibles et très complexes) peuvent-ils présenter un risque plus élevé de stress chez les juges ? Dans l'affirmative, veuillez fournir des détails sur les types d'affaires susceptibles d'être considérés comme présentant un risque plus élevé et expliquer pourquoi.

Exemples d'affaires présentant un risque élevé de stress : placer un suspect sous mandat d'arrêt ; ordonner des actes d'enquête dans les affaires criminelles, parfois dans l'urgence ou en pleine nuit pendant un service de garde (juge d'instruction) ; crainte de ne pas trouver, dans le délai de décision disponible parfois très court, la solution juridique dans un cas juridiquement complexe ou lorsque la règle de droit positif est inexistante (le juge ne peut jamais refuser de juger sous le prétexte que la loi est inexistante ou obscure : si la règle, la loi, n'existe pas pour le

cas concret auquel il est confronté, il appartient au juge de « inventer » la « loi » lui-même, en jugeant en quelque sorte « en équité » ; pressions psychologiques des avocats ou de l'opinion publique et des média dans des affaires sensibles ou médiatisées, crainte de commettre une erreur, etc.

7. Existe-t-il d'autres facteurs contextuels susceptibles d'avoir un impact différent sur le bien-être des juges (par exemple, la juridiction, l'ancienneté ou l'expérience) ? Si oui, pourquoi, à votre avis, ces facteurs pourraient-ils avoir des effets différents dans la pratique ?

L'enquête précitée de bien-être au travail de 2024 (Service public fédéral Justice) a révélé les problèmes suivants :

- i. Une corrélation positive entre l'ancienneté et divers facteurs influençant le bien-être. Ces facteurs sont principalement liés à l'expérience acquise. Notamment :*
 - 1. La clarification de la fonction et des attentes*
 - 2. Les possibilités de développement de carrière*
 - 3. L'autonomie*
 - 4. Les relations interpersonnelles tant avec les supérieurs qu'avec les collègues*
 - 5. Le lien entre les valeurs personnelles et les valeurs de l'institution*
 - 6. L'interaction famille/travail*
- ii. Cependant, certains facteurs ont des corrélations négatives avec l'ancienneté et sont liés principalement à l'introduction de nouvelles tâches ou de l'importance accrue de l'utilisation des TIC, mais également à l'augmentation des responsabilités et donc à la pression accrue sur la qualité attendue du travail rendu.*
- iii. On a constaté que des corrélations étaient les mêmes pour les tranches d'âges.*

III. Mesures existantes pour soutenir et promouvoir le bien-être des juges

8. Selon vous, quelles stratégies personnelles pourraient aider les juges à gérer leur propre stress et leur bien-être au travail ?

- La concentration au travail et la persévérance à chaque instant de la journée de travail. Une partie du bien-être du juge réside dans la satisfaction personnelle du travail bien accompli et achevé.*
- La lutte quotidienne contre les retards et lenteurs.*
- Le droit ou le devoir de dire « non » lorsque la charge de travail risque de devenir trop lourde.*
- La concision dans la rédaction des jugements*
- La bonne organisation du travail*
- Se fixer des objectifs atteignables*
- Se ménager des temps « obligatoires » de détente durant le week-end, avec sa famille, des amis ou seul ;*
- Oser parler au chef de corps quand « cela ne va pas », ne pas se mettre la tête dans le sable ;*
- Oser envisager et demander un changement d'affectation ou de fonction (changer de section du tribunal, changer de tribunal, quitter le siège pour le parquet, etc.) ;*

9. Les institutions judiciaires de votre pays mesurent-elles et contrôlent-elles actuellement les niveaux de stress et de bien-être des juges ? Dans l'affirmative, veuillez préciser ce que cela implique et à quelle fréquence les niveaux sont contrôlés.

Des analyses des risques psychosociaux ont été menées en 2019 et 2024. Celles-ci ont été faites à partir de questionnaires généraux sans être spécifiques au fonctionnement des juges. Elles permettent néanmoins d'avoir un aperçu des risques psychosociaux encourus.

10. Les juges reçoivent-ils une formation sur la manière de préserver leur bien-être ? Dans l'affirmative, veuillez fournir des détails sur cette formation et indiquer à quel stade elle est dispensée.

L'institut de formation judiciaire, organe officiel chargé par la loi tant de la formation initiale des juges que de leur formation continuée, offre trois formations pour préserver le bien-être :

- *Mieux gérer son stress*
- *Gestion de conflits sur les lieux de travail*
- *Bien-être au travail pour dirigeants.*

11. De quelle manière les tribunaux de votre pays répondent-ils aux efforts visant à réduire le stress des juges et à favoriser leur bien-être ?

A notre avis, les tribunaux ne sont pas assez capables d'accomplir des efforts pour réduire le stress des juges ou favoriser leur bien-être. Face à la surcharge de travail à laquelle de très nombreux juges sont confrontés, les directions des cours et tribunaux sont souvent démunies. Elles sont écartelées entre, d'une part, le volonté « d'avoir de bons chiffres » et d'être « performant » malgré l'utilisation toujours plus élevée du système judiciaire dans les affaires civiles, commerciales et fiscales, et malgré l'augmentation de la délinquance, et, d'autre part, la nécessité de ménager et préserver le bien-être psychologique et physique des juges, rouages indispensables du tribunal.

Cette situation est remédiable : il faut faire des efforts de conscientisation chez les présidents de tribunaux et il peut être raisonnablement assumé que ceux-ci, s'ils sont sensibilisés et qu'ils reçoivent de l'aide spécialisée (par exemple des assistants psycho-sociaux) ou sont formés, auront à cœur de tenter d'améliorer le bien-être psycho-social de leurs juges.

12. Selon vous, les mesures actuelles pour soutenir et promouvoir le bien-être des juges dans votre pays sont-elles suffisantes ?

a. Des moyens ont été mis à disposition pour créer, au niveau du Service public fédéral Justice (Ministère de la Justice) une équipe spécifique à la gestion du bien-être. Celle-ci a pour mission de résoudre les problématiques actuelles causées par un manque de politiques de bien-être, de gestion et d'outils de prévention tant primaire que secondaire ou tertiaire.

b. Des défis conjoncturels liés au cadre légal belge en matière de bien-être compliquent la mise en œuvre des efforts entrepris au sein de l'Ordre judiciaire. Les obligations légales et la répartition des responsabilités sont très complexes et peuvent entraîner des retards dans l'exécution des actions ou leur non-réalisation.

L'équipe bien-être du Service public fédéral Justice (Ministère de la Justice) aura la tâche de proposer les actions les plus pertinentes aux réalités rencontrées. Pour cela des analyses doivent être réalisées afin de garantir une réponse optimale aux problématiques actuelles et futures (voy. aussi les réponses aux questions n° 14, 16 et 17, où nous insistons sur la nécessité d'une aide spécifique aux juges, compte tenu de la nature particulière de leur fonction et des risques spécifiques liés à celles-ci).

13. Votre pays a-t-il pris des mesures, ou envisage-t-il de prendre des mesures, pour mettre en œuvre la Déclaration de Nauru sur le bien-être des juges ? Dans l'affirmative, veuillez fournir des détails sur les mesures prises ou envisagées.

Voy. les réponses aux questions précédentes.

IV. Perspectives d'avenir : solutions et défis potentiels

14. Comment les institutions judiciaires et les tribunaux pourraient-ils mieux soutenir le bien-être des juges dans votre pays afin d'assurer le bon fonctionnement du système judiciaire ?

Il faudrait, selon nous, créer des « canaux » de communication permettant aux juges de facilement recevoir de l'aide quand ils en ont besoin. Les présidents de tribunal devraient être associés à la création de ces « canaux ». Il ne faut pas, il me semble, créer nécessairement des structures d'aide dans chaque cour ou tribunal, mais il faut que l'accès soit possible, relativement facile et connu. En outre, il faut, d'après nous, que l'aide soit spécialement organisée et conçue pour les juges, dont la fonction et les responsabilités sont fondamentalement différentes de celle des autres collaborateurs de la Justice.

15. Des stratégies ont-elles été élaborées pour le bien-être des juges, par exemple dans le cadre de la gestion efficace des affaires sensibles et très complexes ?

Certains présidents de tribunaux sont attentifs à accompagner personnellement les juges chargés de dossiers très sensibles ou complexes, et ce par des méthodes qui peuvent varier selon les particularités du cas concret : libérer le juge d'autres tâches, lui donner l'assistance d'un référendaire ou d'un employé ; faire le point régulièrement avec le président ou avec un magistrat expérimenté pour que ce dernier soit le confident du juge sur le plan humain mais aussi sur le plan juridique ; désigner un autre juge comme « back-up » qui, en cas de fatigue ou de besoin de poser des questions ou simplement de parler du dossier, peut être contacté quasi 24/24, etc.

16. Existe-t-il des problèmes ou des défis dans votre pays concernant le développement et la mise en œuvre de telles stratégies au niveau institutionnel et juridictionnel ? Dans l'affirmative, quel type de solutions pouvez-vous proposer pour surmonter ces défis institutionnels et organisationnels ?

Je crois que le bien-être au travail des juges doit faire l'objet d'une approche à la fois locale et nationale. La stratégie nationale doit être développée de manière spécifique pour les juges, selon moi au niveau du Collège des cours et tribunaux, qui est l'organe officiellement organisé par la loi pour superviser et accompagner tous les tribunaux du pays à l'exception de la Cour de cassation. L'expertise du Service public fédéral Justice (=Ministère de la Justice) devrait être en partie transférée vers le Collège des cours et tribunaux dans la mesure où ils concernent les juges. Le bien-être au travail des juges présente des caractéristiques, inhérentes au métier de juge, qui requièrent un travail « sur mesure » pour les juges.

17. Existe-t-il des problèmes ou des défis dans votre pays concernant l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre de telles stratégies au niveau individuel ?

Des efforts ont déjà été accomplis, mais il faut continuer, en se focalisant sur le bien-être des juges, de manière spécialisée et séparée. Cela ne veut pas dire que le bien-être au travail des non-juges doit passer au second plan. Les besoins en termes de prise en compte de la charge émotionnelle et du bien-être au travail chez les collaborateurs de la justice (=non-juges) sont tout

aussi réels et doivent être activement considérés. En outre, certains aspects du bien-être sont communs aux juges et non-juges (espace de travail, bâtiments, sanitaires, environnement informatique, ambiance générale de travail, etc.), mais le métier de juge revêt une dimension tout-à-fait particulière, en raison des responsabilités que seuls les juges exercent, qui doit être traitée de manière spécifique.

18. Dans l'affirmative, quel type de solutions pouvez-vous proposer pour surmonter ces défis au niveau individuel ?

Le bien-être au travail doit être pris en charge déjà au niveau du recrutement des juges : on peut exiger d'un juge un niveau de résistance au stress, à la surcharge et à l'émotion plus grand que chez le citoyen moyen. Si on ne peut pas résister à des situations humainement difficiles, il ne faut pas devenir juge et il importe que les mécanismes de sélection des candidats-juges écartent des profils faibles ou inadaptés à ce métier qui, par définition, est difficile et exigeant.

Mais les juges sont et restent des êtres humains qui, comme tout le monde, ont des faiblesses et des vulnérabilités qui méritent le respect et, si nécessaire, un traitement adéquat, tourné vers le progrès et un bien-être retrouvé. Ils doivent, si c'est nécessaire, pouvoir être accompagnés et aidés dans des situations pénibles.

En outre, le parlement et le gouvernement doivent prévenir le risque d'atteinte au bien-être au travail des juges, en nommant assez de juges, en leur fournissant des collaborateurs de haut niveau capables d'apporter une aide non seulement administrative mais aussi juridique, et en incitant les présidents de tribunaux à améliorer les processus de travail et l'organisation du travail.

19. Souhaitez-vous faire d'autres commentaires sur le bien-être des juges dans votre pays qui n'ont pas été abordés ci-dessus ?

Oui : le bien-être au travail du point de vue de l'infrastructure matérielle. Plusieurs bâtiments de justice sont en mauvais état. Récemment, un tribunal (celui de la ville de Nivelles, dans la province du Brabant wallon) a dû, en catastrophe, sur ordre du bourgmestre, quitter ses locaux historiques en raison de leur inadaptation au risque d'incendie. Les juges ne comprennent pas pourquoi le Service public fédéral Justice (=le Ministère de la Justice) ne parvient pas à fournir des conditions de matérielles de qualité à l'ensemble de ses collaborateurs. Bien entendu, il ne faut pas généraliser et éviter des critiques excessives : certains palais de justice ont été rénovés ou reconstruits et la majorité des juges et collaborateurs travaillent dans de bonnes conditions. Mais il existe trop d'exceptions à ce constat et il convient de tout mettre en œuvre pour que chaque juge et chaque collaborateur (greffiers, assistants, référendaires) dispose d'une infrastructure de bonne qualité, ce qui constitue aussi une condition du bien-être au travail.

Bosnia and Herzegovina / Bosnie-Herzégovine

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

- 1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?**

Judicial well-being is not yet recognized in Bosnia and Herzegovina as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary.

- 2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?**

Unfortunately not. There is not even sufficient awareness of the importance of the well-being of judges and its impact on the integrity of the judiciary and on the perception of the judiciary.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

- 3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?**

Judges in Bosnia and Herzegovina, compared to other professions, have fairly good salaries, good working conditions, sufficient annual leave, and a solid status in society.

- 4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?**

Unfortunately, there are many negative features of judicial work. Excessive caseload, deadlines for completing cases, evaluation of judges, pressure on judges especially in sensitive cases, public distrust in the judiciary, etc.

- 5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?**

There is a stigma surrounding judicial stress and work challenges. Discussions about mental health or stress among judges are not common in Bosnia and Herzegovina at all.

- 6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?**

The greatest risk exists in criminal cases, especially in sensitive cases involving high-ranking officials, complex corruption cases, serious organized crime cases, war crimes cases, etc.

Most of these cases are followed by the public, the media and non-governmental organizations. In some cases, there is great pressure from the media, the public and politics

on the work of judges and prosecutors, all of which affects the proper functioning of the judiciary and public trust in the judiciary.

7. **Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?**

Judicial well-being can also be affected by factors such as: lack of promotion, promotion of younger colleagues, inability to cope with technological developments, non-acceptance of new working methods, etc. These factors can cause dissatisfaction, overall bad performance, lack of concentration, slowness, interpersonal problems, anger, etc.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. **In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?**

Judges can try to anticipate situations that make them feel stressed, try to prepare in advance for stressful events, maintain good health, immunity, eat right, exercise, relax regularly and if necessary, seek psychological help.

9. **Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.**

No.

10. **Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.**

There are training courses for judges on techniques for dealing with stressful situations at work, with the aim of introducing judicial office holders to strategies for overcoming the stress they are exposed to on a daily basis, as well as ways of managing stress.

Trainings are conducted by the Centres for the Education of Judges and Prosecutors In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska.

11. **In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?**

The courts in BiH, as far as I know, are not engaged in alleviating judicial stress and supporting the well-being of judges.

12. **In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?**

Definitely not.

13. **Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.**

Unfortunately, not yet.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. **How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?**

There is a need to recognize and raise awareness of the problem, provide access to psychological support, and provide practical training on how to maintain optimal well-being.

15. **Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?**

Not that I am aware of.

16. **Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?**

Strategies at the institutional and judicial levels do not exist.

It is necessary, first of all, to raise awareness of these problems, to become familiar with the existence of the UNODC Global report on Exploring Linkages between Judicial Well-Being and Judicial Integrity and Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-being, and then to start developing Strategies that will contribute to judicial well-being.

17. **Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?**

N/A

18. **If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?**

N/A

19. **Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?**

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, more attention should be paid to the importance of promoting judicial well-being. It is necessary first to raise awareness of these problems, then to remove stereotypes related to stress, to provide access to psychological support, to offer practical training on how to maintain optimal well-being, to relieve judges in terms of the number of cases and deadlines, etc.

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

The working conditions, the human factor, and the efficiency of the judicial system/ individual judges have been the focus of various studies, reports, and strategies for the development of reform in the judiciary. In 2009, an empirical work-psychological survey of judges in Bulgaria was conducted on the topic "Stress and coping with stress". The aim of the project was to diagnose the level of work-related stress among judges and its causes and to use the results to further develop measures of various natures – individual, personal, interpersonal, organizational, and social – to overcome stress and improve the working environment in the judiciary. Such measures have been consistently taken throughout the years - related to improving working conditions and qualifications, increasing the number of judges and administrative staff, providing access to laws and case law and relevant search engines, introducing the Unified Portal for Electronic Justice, workload distribution, salary increases, longer leave, medical examinations and tests, insurances, team building, etc. Currently, courses on stress management and coping with professional burnout syndrome are organized in various formats by the National Institute of Justice.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

A lot has been done. However, this is an ongoing, demanding, and developing process, introducing new challenges and requiring corresponding solutions.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

-upholding justice: the knowledge that judges play a vital role in upholding the rule of law and ensuring fairness within society; the ability to resolve disputes and provide just outcomes can be deeply rewarding;

-intellectual stimulation: judicial work involves complex legal analysis, interpretation of statutes, and application of legal principles; this constant intellectual engagement can be highly stimulating and satisfying for those with a passion for the law; the variety of legal matters to be dealt with is also challenging and always makes work interesting;

-making a difference-the sense of making a positive contribution to society: judges have the power to impact people's lives in meaningful ways, whether by protecting individual rights, resolving commercial disputes, or ensuring public safety;

-contributing to legal development: judicial decisions can shape the development of legal principles and precedents, contributing to the evolution of the legal system; this opportunity

to influence the law can be particularly fulfilling for judges who are passionate about legal scholarship;

- independence and impartiality: the principle of judicial independence allows judges to exercise their judgment without undue influence, fostering a sense of autonomy and integrity;

- the sense of public service: judges occupy a position of public trust, and their work is essential to the functioning of a democratic society;

- opportunities for career development and promotion;

- good working conditions;

- decent remuneration and good standard of living

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

- high workload and time pressure;

- exposure to traumatic cases and emotionally charged situations, dealing with the pain and suffering of others;

- decision-making responsibility: the weight of making decisions that significantly impact people's lives; the fear of making incorrect decisions or facing public scrutiny can create constant anxiety;

- social isolation: the need to maintain impartiality can lead to social isolation, as judges must limit their interactions with certain individuals and groups;

- public scrutiny and criticism: judges are often subject to public scrutiny and criticism, particularly in high-profile cases; negative media attention and public disapproval;

- ethical dilemmas: judges face constant ethical dilemmas and must always be aware of any potential bias or conflict of interest;

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

It might significantly hinder efforts to support judicial well-being. The stigma discourages judges from seeking professional help, such as therapy or counselling. In the legal profession, showing vulnerability is often perceived as weakness; this makes it difficult for judges to acknowledge their stress or seek help; as a result, the stress and burnout are normalized rather than recognized as serious issues requiring attention.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why? - cases of particular public interest that are widely covered in the media (ex. against politicians, organized crime groups, etc.) and put the judge and/or the case in the centre of the attention of the public

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

No

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

- prioritize physical health - ensuring physical activity, which is a proven stress reliever, sufficient rest, and a healthy diet;
- finding a balance between professional and personal life - setting clear boundaries between work and personal life;
- schedule regular time for hobbies and relaxation - engage in activities that bring joy and relaxation outside of work;
- maintain strong relationships with family and friends;
- consider therapy or counseling; share with other judges;
- prioritize tasks and delegate when possible;
- participation in team building.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

No

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

The National Institute of Justice organizes courses on the topic “Stress Management and Coping with Professional Burnout Syndrome“. Different formats are offered according to the needs and commitment of the participants and at their request and choice - face-to-face training; online training; hybrid training; micro-training lasting up to 60 minutes with synthesized training content and a trainer; relevant self-learning resources from the digital library.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being? - improving working conditions and technical equipment, including the possibility of remote access, providing court assistants, forensic examinations, medical examinations and tests, organizing team building events

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

A lot has been done; however, there are challenges to be faced

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered – not yet.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary? – more recreation facilities, improving the conditions for relaxation in the courts, providing parking spaces at courts, psychological support

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?
No
16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organizational challenges?
- see the answer to question №.15
17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level? - see the answer to question №.15
18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges? - see the answer to question №.15
19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

Croatia / Croatie

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

Unfortunately not. This is an issue which actually nobody takes to public and provokes public debate either in professional nor in general public circles. Quite opposite, general and common opinion is that judges do not deserve even their salaries

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

As in previous answer not at all.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

Judges are performing an important and crucial function in democratic society. So judges can experience satisfaction and well-being if all or at least some of listed elements are fulfilled:

- Enough human force to support work of a judge,
- Decent and respectable working premises,
- Collegial atmosphere in the court,
- Feeling that they will be protected if unjustly attacked by parties, politicians or influential groups,
- Security in courts,
- Court hierarchy supports and protects independence of a judge
- Manageable workload,
- Decent salaries comparable to holders of other two powers of the state

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

Everything opposite to the elements listed in answer 3.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

Of course, kind of reluctance to raise those issues and to connect judge's performance with well-being of judges hinders efforts to support changes in the organization of judiciary which will introduce element of judges' well-being.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

Of course some kind of cases are more stressful and from empiric point of view those cases are:

**-Family cases where children are involved,
-Cases where unfortunate and wounded persons are involved,
-labour cases, (this three group of cases deal with rights of minors and people who have only courts as last resort of protection of their rights and system does not allow judges to act as fast as possible)
-cases against media, civil and criminal
-highly profiled criminal cases of organized crime and or war crimes, (this cases are under big attention of the public, sometime connected with security issues- and this is not natural environment for a judge which is source of enormous stress and frustration)**

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

**-Acknowledge and raise awareness about the problem among judges and from the authorities (i.e Ministry of Justice) –
- Promote open dialogue and create a safe space for everyone to speak up and find a relief or remedy;
- Peer support
- Provide access to psychological support;
-Training, guidance and tips on how to maintain optimal well-being;
- Fair and just workload distribution**

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

NO. For authorities in my country this is another galaxy.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

NO.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

There are no such efforts in the courts and I am afraid this angle they even do not think about.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

NO, because there are no such measures at all.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

Unfortunately answer is negative.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

In Croatia as it can be easily seen from answers to the Questionnaire authorities in the Courts and outside of courts did nothing to raise awareness of judges' well-being either among judges or among general public.

Having this in mind first of all association of judges and judges themselves should put up this topic in public and explain importance of this issue for well-functioning of judiciary.

Hopefully if other stakeholders with more power and influence will understand and accept importance of judges well-being some changes could be possible because as it is shown in UNODC Survey lack of optimal well-being of judges creates limitations to the efficiency of justice and court administration , quality of decisions and judgments, public trust and confidence in the judiciary, access to justice , integrity of judges and the judiciary and procedural fairness .

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

No. only on case to case basis certain judge could ask and he/she will be provided with additional supporting staff.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

See answer under 14.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

There are no problems because any strategy does not exist. So main and first challenge would be to raise this issue as such.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

See answer under 14.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

No.

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

Yes, judicial well-being is indeed recognized as an essential component of an effective judiciary in **Cyprus**, and this acknowledgment is reflected in the various ongoing judicial reforms aimed at enhancing the efficiency and functionality of the court system. These reforms include the reduction of case backlogs, the implementation of new procedural rules, and the digitalization of court processes. All these initiatives indirectly contribute to improving the well-being of judges by reducing administrative burdens and optimizing workload distribution.

The restructuring of Cyprus's judicial system is a critical step towards addressing longstanding systemic inefficiencies and reducing case backlogs. This comprehensive reform includes the establishment of the new Court of Appeal and the division of the Supreme Court into two distinct entities: the new Supreme Court and the Supreme Constitutional Court. Each entity plays a specific role within a newly configured three-level jurisdiction, enhancing the judicial process's efficiency and focus.

Furthermore, the reform efforts are supported by the European Commission's Directorate General for Structural Reform Support, indicating a commitment to comprehensive and sustainable improvements in Cyprus's judiciary system. This holistic approach to judicial reform not only focuses on systemic and procedural improvements but also indirectly supports judicial well-being by aiming to create a more efficient and less burdensome work environment.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

While ongoing judicial reforms in Cyprus have been effective in addressing systemic inefficiencies and procedural improvements, there appears to be limited explicit focus on the mental and emotional well-being of judges, which is equally crucial for the effective functioning of the judiciary. Judicial well-being encompasses not only the physical but also the mental and emotional health of judges, which can significantly impact their ability to perform their duties effectively.

The global trend acknowledges the importance of judicial well-being as a critical component of a well-functioning judiciary. However, in Cyprus, targeted support mechanisms specifically aimed at addressing these aspects seem to be sparse. There is certainly room for improvement in developing programs that support and promote the well-being of judges more directly.

Such initiatives ideally should be led by the judiciary itself to ensure they align with the needs of judges while maintaining judicial independence and upholding the separation of powers. External interventions, while well-intentioned, could potentially be perceived as undermining judicial autonomy. Therefore, it's essential that any measures to support judicial well-being are designed and implemented internally within the judicial system.

Strengthening judicial well-being through internal initiatives could enhance judicial resilience, improve operational efficiency, and reinforce public confidence in the integrity and independence of the judiciary. This approach not only supports the health and well-being of the judges but also contributes to the broader objective of maintaining a robust, fair, and effective judicial system.

Furthermore, due to the fact that the judiciary in Cyprus is not financially autonomous, it remains dependent on the executive for the provision of essential resources such as infrastructure, clerical and technical staff, and modern court facilities. In practice, the state often fails to respond adequately or promptly to the judiciary's requests to meet its operational needs. This lack of responsiveness directly undermines not only the efficient administration of justice but also the working conditions and psychological well-being of judges.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

Judicial work indeed offers several intrinsic rewards that significantly contribute to judges' satisfaction and well-being. One of the most profound sources of satisfaction is the strong sense of purpose derived from upholding justice and the rule of law, which not only reinforces their commitment to public service but also provides a deep sense of fulfillment. Judges enjoy a high level of intellectual engagement as they frequently analyze complex legal issues, interpret laws, and make decisions with far-reaching implications. This intellectual challenge promotes continuous learning and professional growth.

The principle of judicial independence ensures that judges can make decisions based on the law and their interpretations of the facts, free from external pressures. This autonomy is crucial in reinforcing judges' professional integrity and allows them to act impartially, which is deeply satisfying from an ethical standpoint. Judges also play a critical role in society by resolving disputes, protecting fundamental rights, and maintaining social order, thereby contributing positively to the community and seeing tangible outcomes from their judgments.

The judiciary is a respected profession that offers career stability and security, fostering a strong professional identity and contributing to personal and professional well-being. Despite the often-solitary nature of their work, judges are part of a broader judicial community that offers support and collegiality, providing a supportive network that enhances job satisfaction. In particular, more experienced or senior judges are generally receptive and supportive toward junior and newly appointed judges, offering valuable guidance and mentorship. Additionally, education and training on practical aspects of judicial work have been introduced, assisting new judges in addressing areas where they may encounter difficulties.

The structured work environment and the positive impact on individuals and communities further contribute to judicial well-being, making the role both rewarding and meaningful despite its inherent challenges.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

Judicial work, while rewarding, also presents significant challenges that can contribute to stress and dissatisfaction. A primary concern for judges is the high workload and case backlog, which place intense pressure on them to deliver timely and accurate decisions, especially in systems with limited resources. Additionally, judges often face emotional fatigue and psychological strain due to exposure to distressing cases involving violent crimes, child abuse, or intense family disputes.

Judges try cases on a daily basis and, consequently, are required to read and write their judgments during non-working hours, including evenings and weekends. This results in prolonged working hours that are both physically and mentally demanding, often encroaching upon personal and family time. Judicial vacation periods are fixed and limited, rendering it particularly difficult for judges to take additional time off either to rest or to address accumulated work. Moreover, not all judges are assigned personal secretarial support, which necessitates that they personally undertake various administrative tasks. This further exacerbates their workload and diverts time and attention from the core judicial function of adjudicating cases and writing their judgments.

Another significant challenge is the inherent isolation of the role. Judges must maintain strict impartiality, which restricts their social interactions and public engagements to avoid potential conflicts of interest. This necessary professional detachment can lead to feelings of loneliness and stress. Public scrutiny, particularly in high-profile or politically sensitive cases, adds another layer of pressure, sometimes exposing judges to media criticism or even threats to their personal safety.

Moreover, judges have limited avenues to seek support, as doing so might be perceived as compromising their independence. The principles of separation of powers and judicial independence, while fundamental, can inadvertently result in inadequate institutional support mechanisms for judicial well-being, as external interventions are often viewed as threats to their autonomy.

Without sufficient internal structures to support psychological and professional resilience, judges may struggle with managing stress effectively. Therefore, it is crucial to address these challenges through internally driven initiatives that are essential for safeguarding both the well-being of judges and the effective functioning of the judiciary.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

Stigma surrounding judicial stress remains a significant barrier to well-being, often discouraging judges from acknowledging their difficulties or seeking support. The expectation that judges must always display resilience and impartiality fosters a culture in which admitting to stress may be perceived as a weakness. This perception can potentially undermine judicial authority and erode public confidence. Additionally, there is a fear among judges that acknowledging stress might be interpreted as an inability to perform their duties effectively, which further deters them from accessing support resources or advocating for institutional reforms.

The lack of formal peer support and confidential psychological assistance exacerbates the sense of isolation, forcing many judges to cope alone. This increases the risk of burnout and emotional fatigue. Unlike other professions where mental health awareness and support are increasingly normalized, judicial stress is often seen as an inherent part of the role rather than a challenge that requires proactive management.

Overcoming this stigma necessitates a judiciary-led approach that frames well-being as an institutional priority rather than a personal vulnerability. Establishing confidential peer support networks, judicial stress management training, and access to psychological services within the judiciary can help normalize discussions around well-being while preserving judicial independence. Addressing these issues internally is crucial to ensuring the health of the judiciary and the effective administration of justice.

Even the opportunity to share feelings and sentiments among colleagues or to discuss challenges with fellow judges—particularly with more senior members of the judiciary—can be of significant assistance. Such exchanges foster a sense of solidarity, help judges realise they are not alone in facing these pressures, and may offer practical guidance and emotional support to alleviate some of the burdens inherent in judicial work.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

Certain types of legal cases indeed pose a higher risk of judicial stress due to their complexity, sensitivity, and the emotional intensity involved. Criminal cases involving violence, sexual offenses, and child abuse, for instance, expose judges to traumatic evidence, which can lead to secondary trauma and compassion fatigue. These cases often involve direct harm to vulnerable individuals, intensifying the emotional weight of judicial responsibilities.

Family law disputes, including child custody and domestic violence cases, also present significant challenges. These cases require judges to make deeply personal decisions that impact the lives of families and children, often under emotionally charged circumstances.

Asylum, immigration, and human rights cases involve moral dilemmas with potentially life-altering consequences for the individuals involved. The decisions in these cases can affect an individual's freedom, safety, and basic human rights, adding a profound moral dimension to the judicial process.

Cases related to terrorism, national security, and political corruption not only attract intense public scrutiny but may also pose potential security threats to judges themselves. The high-profile nature of these cases and the possible implications of their outcomes contribute to the stress experienced by judges.

Furthermore, judges handling high-profile financial crimes and corporate liability cases face external pressures and reputational risks. The complexity and the high stakes involved can lead to intense public and media attention, thereby increasing stress.

Medical negligence, end-of-life decisions, and environmental litigation require judges to balance legal, ethical, and scientific considerations. These cases often involve critical health and

environmental issues that carry significant ethical implications and require a deep understanding of complex scientific data.

The convergence of public scrutiny, ethical dilemmas, and security risks in these types of cases significantly amplifies judicial fatigue and emotional strain. This underscores the need for effective judicial support mechanisms to help mitigate stress and promote well-being among judges

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

While judicial independence in Cyprus is firmly established, several contextual factors such as caseload burdens, seniority, case sensitivity, and public scrutiny impact judges differently, creating varying levels of stress. Junior judges often face the challenge of adapting to their roles while managing demanding workloads, which can be overwhelming without sufficient experience. In contrast, senior judges deal with the pressures of high-stakes rulings and the responsibilities of judicial leadership, which can also be stressful but in different ways.

The existence of different levels of judges and the fact that promotion criteria are based not only on seniority may lead to antagonism, hard feelings, or even disruptions in the relationships among judges. Moreover, judges who are not promoted often experience increased stress and may find it more difficult to face lawyers and litigants confidently or to keep up with their workload.

Judges handling criminal, family, and asylum cases often experience heightened emotional strain due to the sensitivity of the issues they adjudicate. These cases typically involve personal and profound impacts on people's lives, leading to increased emotional involvement and stress. On the other hand, judges presiding over constitutional and corruption-related cases often face intense public and media scrutiny. The high visibility of these cases can lead to external pressure, adding another layer of stress.

To safeguard judicial well-being without compromising judicial independence, it is crucial to implement judiciary-led initiatives. These could include peer support systems that provide a network for sharing experiences and coping strategies, confidential psychological assistance to address mental health needs, and judicial stress management training to equip judges with the tools to handle stress effectively. Ensuring that judges receive the necessary support while preserving their autonomy is essential for maintaining a healthy judiciary and upholding the quality of the judicial process.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and wellbeing arising from work?

Judges in Cyprus can manage their own stress and enhance their well-being through a variety of personal strategies that address the unique challenges of their profession. Effective time management is crucial; by prioritizing tasks and setting realistic deadlines, judges can reduce the overwhelm that comes from heavy caseloads. Incorporating mindfulness and meditation into their routine can also significantly improve focus and emotional resilience, helping to manage the intense pressures of judicial work.

Physical activity is another key strategy; regular exercise not only alleviates physical stress but also helps in reducing mental strain. For deeper emotional issues, professional counseling can provide a safe space to discuss challenges and develop coping mechanisms, which is essential given the sensitive nature of many cases judges handle.

Participating in peer support networks offers judges the opportunity to connect with colleagues who understand the pressures of the legal field, providing a platform for sharing experiences and coping strategies. Continuous learning through professional development and stress management training can keep judges up to date with the best practices for balancing the demands of their roles.

Finally, setting clear boundaries between work and personal life helps maintain a healthy work-life balance, protecting personal time and space from professional encroachments. These strategies, when combined, offer a comprehensive approach to managing stress and promoting well-being, supporting judges in their crucial roles while preserving their autonomy and the integrity of the judicial process.

Incorporating training and guidance by qualified experts as part of judicial training can further equip judges with practical strategies to manage stress, maintain emotional resilience, and navigate the complex pressures of their role.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

NO

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

While the Cyprus School of Judges [Judicial Training School (CJTS)] provides comprehensive judicial education, specific training focused on judges' mental and emotional well-being is not prominently featured in the curriculum. Well-being issues are indirectly addressed through training sessions on judicial ethics, workload management, and participation in EU-funded professional development programs. These components are crucial for maintaining judicial effectiveness but do not explicitly focus on mental health and stress management.

Given the increasing recognition of the importance of judicial well-being as integral to judicial effectiveness, there is a significant opportunity for Cyprus to expand judiciary-led initiatives. By integrating structured support programs focused specifically on mental and emotional health into the judicial training curriculum, Cyprus can enhance the support provided to judges. This could include dedicated workshops or sessions on stress management, psychological resilience, and healthy work-life balance, ideally incorporated at various stages of a judge's career to reinforce these principles continually.

Preserving judicial independence while providing this support is crucial; thus, these initiatives should ideally be developed and led internally within the judiciary. This approach would not only address the well-being needs of judges but also ensure that the solutions are tailored to the unique challenges of the judicial environment.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

In Cyprus, significant strides have been made to support judicial well-being through structural reforms, the implementation of new procedural rules, and the digitalization of court processes. These changes aim to reduce workloads and enhance judicial operations, thus improving efficiency. However, these measures, while beneficial, do not fully address the personal well-being of judges.

Persistent case backlogs and heavy workloads remain major sources of stress, placing considerable pressure on judges and affecting their ability to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Although Cyprus has made commendable progress in modernising judicial infrastructure, these structural and technological improvements alone are not sufficient to meet the broader well-being needs of judges.

There is a growing recognition of the need for more targeted support measures. These should include confidential mental health services, peer mentorship programs, and well-being workshops designed to foster resilience and promote a healthy work-life balance.

Additionally, ergonomic improvements in the workplace and physical health support are crucial to address the demands of judicial work. This involves providing adjustable chairs and desks, ensuring adequate lighting, and properly setting up monitors to enhance comfort and reduce the risk of injury.

Workload management should be continuously evaluated to prevent burnout, with the introduction of flexible scheduling options where feasible. Supporting new mothers with extended maternity leave and tailored wellness programs would further enhance judicial well-being.

While reforms to date have strengthened judicial efficiency, expanding well-being initiatives is essential to ensure a more balanced, resilient, and sustainable judiciary in Cyprus.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

As of now, Cyprus has not formally adopted the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-being.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

To better support the well-being of judges and ensure the effective functioning of the judiciary, judicial institutions and courts might consider several strategies. Enhancing team support by building a well-coordinated team of judicial assistants, secretaries, and administrative personnel can significantly reduce the administrative burden on judges. This allows judges to focus more on their core judicial responsibilities, such as handling case files and conducting in-depth legal research, which are crucial for making well-informed decisions.

Promoting work-life balance is also essential. Establishing policies that encourage flexible working hours, remote work options, and clear work boundaries helps judges maintain mental relaxation and reduces the risk of burnout. Creating formal mentorship programs and peer support networks provides judges avenues for sharing experiences and coping strategies for the stresses of their roles. These networks facilitate resilience training and offer a supportive community.

Implementing systems that prioritize tasks, delegate administrative duties, and allow for structured breaks can help manage workloads more effectively, ensuring judges can focus on decision-making without being overwhelmed by administrative tasks. Continuing education and professional development through regular legal seminars and stress management workshops are vital for judges' growth. These should be accessible and efficiently managed to minimize disruptions to judicial duties. The provision of adequate secretarial staff and legal assistants is also essential to support judges in their daily work, reduce administrative burdens, and allow them to concentrate on the substantive aspects of adjudication.

Cultivating a supportive work environment where there is synergy between judges and their support staff creates a strong, cohesive unit that enhances the office's functionality. This involves fostering a culture of mutual respect and support, which is essential under the high-pressure conditions of judicial work. Additionally, establishing comprehensive health and wellness programs that include access to mental health resources, fitness facilities, and wellness activities supports the physical and mental health of judges.

Regularly soliciting feedback from judges on their needs and the support they receive can help institutions adjust and improve the resources and support mechanisms in place. By implementing these strategies, judicial institutions can enhance the resilience of judges, reduce their stress, and uphold judicial integrity and effectiveness, contributing to the judiciary's efficient and effective functioning.

It is ultimately the responsibility of the State to provide the necessary financial resources, personnel, and legal framework to support judges in fulfilling their functions. This includes offering adequate incentives to attract a greater number of qualified candidates to the judiciary, ensuring all judges have access to supportive staff such as secretaries, and adapting legislation to relieve judges from burdensome tasks where possible. For example, legislative reform is needed to address the current practice whereby judges are required to be on call for urgent mental health cases, often outside regular working hours. This responsibility arises primarily because there is no secure, designated facility available to accommodate individuals with acute mental health needs during nights or weekends. As a result, judges are burdened with urgent decisions in inappropriate conditions, which not only adds to their workload and stress but also raises concerns about the adequacy and safety of the procedures for all involved.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

Yes, judicial systems around the world have developed various strategies to enhance the well-being of judges, particularly when dealing with sensitive and highly complex cases. These strategies are designed to address the unique challenges that judges face in their roles.

One of the key strategies is specialized training which focuses on legal analysis, emotional resilience, and stress management. This training is crucial for helping judges effectively handle

the intricacies and pressures associated with their cases. Such training equips judges with the necessary skills to manage both the intellectual and emotional demands of their work.

Mental health support is another critical area of focus. Counseling and therapy services tailored specifically for judges help them address the psychological stresses of their work. These services provide judges with tools to manage stress and emotional overload effectively, ensuring they can maintain their mental health in the face of challenging cases.

Peer support networks also play a significant role in supporting judges. These networks provide a platform for judges to share experiences and coping strategies, fostering a supportive community. This community helps judges manage the emotional challenges inherent in judicial work and enhances their ability to perform their duties with empathy and efficiency.

Workload management techniques are employed to prevent burnout. Strategies such as rotating case types and adopting team-based approaches help distribute the demands more evenly among judges. This prevents any single judge from becoming overwhelmed by particularly challenging cases.

Mentorship programs are vital, especially for less experienced judges. More experienced judges guide their peers through the intricacies of complex legal cases, providing support and advice that is invaluable for judges who are still acclimatizing to the pressures of the judiciary.

Comprehensive wellness programs that focus on physical, mental, and emotional health are also integral. These programs are essential for judges to maintain their overall well-being and continue performing their duties effectively.

Collectively, these efforts are crucial for sustaining the effectiveness and well-being of judges within the demanding environment of the judiciary. These strategies not only help judges manage the stress and challenges of their roles but also contribute to the sustainability of a healthy judicial system.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

In Cyprus, judicial well-being strategies face challenges such as institutional rigidity and cultural resistance to addressing mental health. Establishing a specialized wellness body within the judiciary could ensure effective program integration, while securing dedicated funding would highlight long-term benefits like improved judicial performance and reduced turnover.

Cultural change is key, requiring awareness campaigns and education to promote mental health as a professional priority. Technology can enhance access to mental health resources, support networks, and resilience training. Regular feedback from judges and judicial assistants is essential for adapting programs to evolving needs.

A structured, integrated approach will strengthen judicial well-being and enhance the judiciary's efficiency and resilience.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

Judicial well-being initiatives in Cyprus encounter several challenges that hinder their development and implementation at the individual level. The demanding caseloads and tight deadlines common in judicial work can make it difficult for judges to find time to participate in wellness programs, mentorship opportunities, or stress management training. Additionally, there is a traditional reluctance within the judiciary to openly discuss mental health issues, which can further limit engagement in these initiatives.

The absence of structured incentives for participation in well-being programs is another significant barrier. Without clear benefits or recognition, judges may not see the value in allocating their limited time to these activities. This issue could be addressed by developing more tailored and flexible approaches that recognize the diverse pressures judges face. Making these initiatives more accessible and relevant could help ensure they effectively support judicial well-being.

To overcome these challenges, it could be beneficial to integrate well-being programs into the daily routine of judges, perhaps by scheduling them during less busy periods or incorporating them into mandatory training sessions. Enhancing the visibility and perceived importance of mental health within the judiciary through awareness campaigns and top-down endorsements from judicial leadership might also help reduce stigma and encourage participation. By adjusting the strategies to fit the unique needs and constraints of the judiciary, these wellness initiatives can become more effective and widely adopted.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

To enhance engagement and address individual-level challenges in judicial well-being, several strategic approaches can be implemented. First, well-being programs should be seamlessly integrated into the daily schedules of judges, with regular sessions that are part of their routine. Offering professional recognition for participating in resilience training or wellness activities could motivate judges to engage more actively.

Awareness initiatives are also essential, as they foster a more open approach to mental health within the judiciary. These initiatives can help create a supportive judicial culture that encourages judges to seek help when needed without fear of stigma.

Another effective strategy involves strengthening the role of judicial assistants by providing them with structured career incentives and specialized training in case management, legal research, and workflow optimization. This not only improves the efficiency of judicial processes but also supports judges in focusing more effectively on their core responsibilities while maintaining their well-being.

Additionally, achieving sustainable well-being strategies requires a shift in the judiciary's culture to prioritize mental health and well-being, complemented by structural enhancements that provide the necessary resources and infrastructure to support these initiatives effectively. Implementing targeted incentives for participation in well-being activities can also motivate judges to engage with these programs.

Ensuring the long-term effectiveness of these strategies involves continuous evaluation and adaptation to meet the evolving needs of the judiciary. By adopting these integrated solutions, judicial institutions can better support the well-being of judges, ensuring they remain effective in their roles while maintaining a healthy work-life balance. These changes not only benefit individual judges but also enhance the overall functioning and integrity of the judiciary.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

Social interactions within a judge's office are crucial for fostering a supportive and efficient work environment. Strong interpersonal relationships among judges, judicial assistants, secretaries, and administrative personnel help create a collegial atmosphere that alleviates the pressures of judicial work. Open communication, teamwork, and mutual respect contribute to a more balanced and productive workplace. Regular informal interactions, whether through discussions on case management, legal research collaboration, or simple social exchanges, strengthen office cohesion and morale. Judicial assistants are pivotal in facilitating communication and workflow coordination, ensuring that judges receive comprehensive legal and administrative support. Encouraging a culture of trust and cooperation within the judicial office helps reduce stress and enhances overall job satisfaction.

Furthermore, judicial well-being in Cyprus remains an evolving issue that necessitates institutional commitment and cultural transformation. While recent reforms have improved efficiency, judicial well-being must be recognized as a core component of judicial effectiveness, not just an ancillary concern. Judges continue to face increasing caseloads, administrative burdens, and limited resources, impacting their ability to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

A structured approach to judicial support is essential. This includes expanding the role of judicial assistants, strengthening mentorship programs, and integrating mental health resources. Judicial well-being should be systematically incorporated into professional development, with clear incentives for participation in resilience training and wellness programs. Additionally, structured team-building activities, mentorship initiatives, and professional networking opportunities can reinforce a sense of shared responsibility and institutional cohesion. This comprehensive approach can help address the challenges and support the overall well-being of judges, contributing to a more effective judiciary.

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?
2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

Answer to questions 1 and 2:

Judicial well-being is certainly recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in Denmark. Both the Danish Court Administration and the courts focus on achieving and maintaining an attractive working environment with career opportunities, flexibility and work-life balance. Among other initiatives, a survey among judges as well as other court staff is conducted every third year with a view to assessing their well-being. As an integral part, the surveys include management of the courts. The surveys are followed up both at the national level and locally at the individual court level. According to the 2025 action plan of the Danish courts, there is, among other things, a focus on local initiatives to follow-up on the most recent survey, which was conducted in 2024.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?
4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?
5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?
6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?
7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

Answer to questions 3-7:

Please see answers to question 1 and 2. I believe that many judges find their job inspiring intellectually and with the opportunity to deal with meaningful matters. However, especially the district courts and the high courts have experienced heavy caseloads, which has led to various initiatives. Among other things, the political parties in 2023 adopted a resolution that enabled the courts to create new positions for judges and other court staff. Also, following up on the survey among judges and other court staff conducted in 2024 with a view to assessing the well-being of them, there is a continued focus on the workload and the allocation of tasks among employees of the courts.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?
9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.
10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.
11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?
12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?
13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

Answer to questions 8-13:

Please see the answers to questions 1-7.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?
15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?
16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of

solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?
18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?
19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

Answer to questions 14-19:

Please see the answers to questions 1-7.

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

Yes, judicial well-being is recognised as an important issue. At the moment, special attention is paid to mental wellness. There are special programs dedicated to that (for example, March is “Mental wellness month” in courts), there are trainings for dealing with stress, organized psychological help etc.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

Yes. There are many stress factors in the judiciary (cuts, reforms, lack of promotion etc) but these are not necessarily something that can be considered as support tools (or lack of).

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

Solving the dispute, giving the way forward for people in stress, safeguarding the democracy and rule of law, dealing with interesting legal problems, turning chaos to order, restoring justice. Also, positive features can be recognition, work conditions, staff, good leadership (if available), salary, social guarantees.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

Workload, attacks on judiciary (in media, social media, by politicians, even physical threats), insufficient funding, lack of promotion, unclear selection of court presidents, low salary, lack of social guarantees, problems with disciplinary procedures.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

Question is not clear.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

Cases with public interest (media or social media presence) like family cases, defamation cases, big criminal cases. Also, behaviour of certain participants of the procedure can rise stress level.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

Judges at biggest courts can be more be allocated to stress. Also, less experienced judges may feel more stressed. Recently there has been few cases when recent judges have quitted the job after few years (in first, appellate and Supreme Court level). It may reflect dissatisfaction of the work.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

Realistic expectations of the job (the job is very demanding and probably not for everyone), mentorship, case management skills, time management (including allocating time for personal life and hobbies), courage to decide a case, skills to mentally detach from cases (not take it to home).

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

It is recognized as a problem but not monitored more specifically. However, there are some questionnaires about work satisfaction overall.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

Yes, case management and some other such trainings are available. There is also web based psychological help available.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

By recognizing a problem, providing theoretical help (like leaflets, posters), promoting training and mentorship (for new judges). There are appreciation events organized for seasoned judges (like 2 days in the spa-resort with some lectures). New judges receive special training which also address such problems.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

Yes. At the same, always can do better.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

No.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

Good organization is a big block of judicial well-being. If a court is run well by the court president, judges' opinions are heard while deciding important questions, promotion is there, funds are sufficient and distributed well, disciplinary procedure is predictable and just etc – all that can make a huge difference. Judges are more stressed if the court or court system is run badly. Also, there has to be a communicator(s) with the society (specially media contact) who deals swiftly and efficiently with issues arises in society. Good training is also important because judges need personal tools to deal with the job stress. Judges' job is unique and it is hard to prepare for that outside the judiciary (decision-making burden, ethical restraints etc).

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

That topic can be covered better.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

It is hard to find a really good trainers and funding such training is always a challenge. Also, this topic is interdisciplinary (covers psychology, law, practical input), which make creating a good training more complicated.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

No.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

-

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

Mental well-being is more of an issue to Gen Z (born 2000 and later) judges than Gen X (born before 1980) judges. Therefore attention should be paid to generation specific trainings (methodology, topics etc).

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?
I would say that judicial well-being is recognised as an important issue at least in festive occasion speeches and official statements but these recognitions have not resulted in concrete action in corresponding manner.
2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?
No, I do not.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

The most important features contributing to well-being of judges are the intellectual challenges the judicial work offers every day and the opportunity to test oneself while doing the work of a judge. Furthermore, the knowledge of the importance of judges' work for the benefit of the society and of fellow citizens helps enormously to endure the strain and the stress of the work.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

There are several features which may cause judges to experience stress and dissatisfaction. It depends very much on an individual judge how much and from which features he/she experiences stress or dissatisfaction. The most common such features relate, according to my understanding, to excessive workload, to a relatively low level of wages compared to how demanding and important the work of a judge is, to inadequate IT systems and equipment the judges are compelled to use in their work and to the specific part of the "clientele" of the courts that only seeks to complicate and to unnecessarily delay the court trials.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

I do not see any kind of stigma generally hindering efforts to support judicial well-being. Of course, there may be individual cases in which e.g. the superior of a judge, due to a wrong kind of consideration for the feelings of the judge in question, is not willing to take necessary action to help the judge suffering from health problems or from an excessive workload and feeling unwell because of these reasons.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

I suspect there are as many answers to this kind of question as there are answerers. In general, I would think that cases that are significantly larger than the average, e.g. trials which take several months or even years to be completed, offer challenges which cause a great deal of stress. On the other hand, the complexity of a case is not necessarily in itself a feature causing a great deal of stress, it may even increase the well-being of a judge because of the intellectual challenges it offers. Some judges experience a great deal of stress when handling cases which in a significant way affect the lives of the parties, e.g. child custody or child welfare cases.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

Experience certainly has a bearing on a judge's well-being. An experienced judge has during his/her career unavoidably been in a lot of tricky situations and trials which tends to increase his/her confidence in being able to deal with such situations also in the future. On the other hand, as a judge becomes older, he/she may also have to acknowledge the fact that his/her capacities are not on the same level as they used to be or that he/she has difficulties in following e.g. the development of modern technologies which may have a great deal of importance in certain types of cases and are present also in the practical daily work of a judge.

The younger, less experienced judges may, in turn, be faced with difficult legal or procedural problems they have no previous experience of and suffer from stress because of that. On the other hand they may be better equipped to meet the challenges of the modern society and technologies than their more experienced colleagues, which may make the work in certain ways easier for them than for those more experienced colleagues.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

Such personal strategies are, no doubt, very individual. In any case, all judges are well advised to take care of their health. Sufficient physical exercise and healthy living habits make it easier to endure the strain and the stress arising from working as a judge. Some may feel they gain vigour and strength from being culturally or societally active. A happy personal and family life is always a feature which contributes to well-being of a judge. In any case, the most important thing to remember is that a judge needs to have life outside of the court premises, too.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

This has not been done in a very systematic way. The National Courts Administration has in 2022 conducted a survey on the working conditions and the well-being of the personnel

of the courts. This survey was done in cooperation with Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. The previous survey was conducted by the Supreme Court – also in cooperation with Finnish Institute of Occupational Health – in 2009.

The Finnish Association of Judges (Union of Judges) has conducted surveys belonging to this field in 2019 and 2021. The emphasis in these surveys was on one hand the amount and the ways judges are exposed to inappropriate attempts to influence their work and other improper behaviour experienced by them in the work, and on the other hand on various aspects of great of variety on the field of the working conditions and other features affecting judges' well-being. The most recent survey of this kind is being made during this spring (I received the link to the questionnaire today).

In all courts there are also conducted at regular intervals (every two years) personnel surveys of the State (so called VMBaro) which monitor levels of job satisfaction. These surveys include also aspects of experienced stress and well-being but are for large parts concentrated on matters which do not have (at least not directly) bearing on them.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

In truth, no. There may be individual projects for the personnel of certain courts in the framework of which also the maintaining of the well-being of judges is included in the topics to be handled. However, it is not a question of systematic and certainly not personal/individual training, in these projects either.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

The courts (according to my understanding absolutely all courts) arrange annually a few occasions intended for the recreation of their personnel. These vary from common days for physical exercise to opportunities to take part in various cultural events and even personnel parties including food and drink. Some courts offer opportunities to physical exercise through e.g. renting premises for ball games in various sports facilities (e.g. 1 hour per week). The courts also offer financial support for their personnel for sports and cultural activities. The amount of this support is probably most often 300 euros per year.

The courts may also arrange individual projects to improve work atmosphere and thus increase well-being of their personnel. This kind of work is, however, by no means systematic and is very dependant on extra funding the availability of which is very unsure.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

No. The ever-increasing workload and demands (both qualitative and quantitative) towards the courts and the judges and the stress arising from these are only marginally alleviated by what efforts there may be taken in individual courts. The financial resources available for this kind of work are very scarce.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

I am not aware that such steps would be under consideration.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

The workload of judges (and other court personnel) ought to be reduced in a significant way. This, in turn, requires more financial resources from the State, the receiving of which is wishful thinking in the current economic crisis of the State.

Well-functioning IT systems and equipment (computers) in which they are used would also be very helpful. Unfortunately, e.g. creating a new electronic case handling system for the use of the general courts has resulted in a failure after using tens of millions of euros during a period exceeding ten years. It is remarkably unlikely that a sufficient funding would be available to fix the key deficiencies of the system.

So, all that in practice can be done is various attempts to adjust the working methods and the organisation of the courts in a way that alleviates deficiencies bothering the IT systems. The well-being of judges can also be increased through more careful planning of the working methods and case allocation, but these can in my opinion only have limited positive results if the main problems (the excessive workload, insufficient resources and badly functioning IT systems) are not solved.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

The courts are trying to allocate those kinds of cases in a fair manner. For exceptionally large and demanding trials it is normal to seek volunteers. In this way it may be able to find for these cases such judges who find the rewards of the case greater than the hardships. Task rotation is widely in use in our courts in order to share the burden of typically strenuous cases more equally between judges.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

The scarcity of resources causes major problems for every kind of development and implementation strategies. At court level significant problems may arise from the fact that all administrative decision powers are in all courts – save the supreme level courts – vested in one single person, namely the chief judge of the court. If this person does not have a working vision of his/her own for necessary changes and is not willing to listen to other's views either, challenges for any kind of development are great. At court level another great challenge is caused by the fact that the financial independence of the courts is very limited.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

At individual level it is often challenging to combine work and its demands with a normal and happy personal and family life. On the other hand, e.g. the demands of the family life – depending on each individual situation – may set limits to what kind of new tasks a judge is able to take when his/her court and the tasks within the court are reorganized.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

There are no patent solutions for overcoming these challenges. Each judge in each individual situation must ponder them separately.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

No.

France

I. Reconnaître l'importance du bien-être des juges et son impact sur l'efficacité des pouvoirs judiciaires

1. Le bien-être des juges est-il reconnu comme une question importante et un facteur contribuant à l'efficacité du pouvoir judiciaire dans votre pays ? Si oui, comment cela se fait-il et à quel niveau ?

NON. Si la sécurité physique des juges face aux menaces qui semblent se multiplier est une préoccupation croissante, le bien-être des juges, et l'équilibre entre vie professionnelle et vie familiale, ne sont pas des thèmes à l'ordre du jour.

A noter qu'en novembre 2021, une pétition lancée à la suite du suicide d'une jeune juge a recueilli plus de 7000 signatures : https://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2021/11/23/l-appel-de-3-000-magistrats-et-d-une-centaine-de-greffiers-nous-ne-voulons-plus-d-une-justice-qui-n-ecoute-pas-et-qui-chronometre-tout_6103309_3232.html

La situation ne s'est pas améliorée depuis en France.

2. Pensez-vous que des mesures suffisantes sont prises pour soutenir et promouvoir le bien-être des juges dans votre pays, compte tenu de ses implications pour le bon fonctionnement du pouvoir judiciaire ?

NON. Dans les débats publics, l'accent est mis sur la responsabilité (liability), la responsabilité disciplinaire, et la productivité des juges. Leurs conditions de travail sont difficiles mais ne sont pas considérées comme un sujet porteur par les pouvoirs publics.

II. Stress et bien-être des juges

3. Selon vous, quels sont les aspects positifs du travail judiciaire qui peuvent apporter satisfaction et bien-être aux juges ?

La satisfaction de résoudre une situation conflictuelle en rendant un jugement, de dire le droit et de contribuer ainsi à la paix sociale.

4. Selon vous, quelles sont les caractéristiques négatives du travail judiciaire qui peuvent être à l'origine du stress et de l'insatisfaction des juges ?

L'insuffisance du nombre des juges en France, qui ne leur permet pas de traiter suffisamment rapidement les dossiers.

Le fait que les parties et leurs avocats n'hésitent plus à s'adresser à la presse et aux réseaux sociaux pour critiquer les décisions de justice et la personne des juges.

La durée des audiences pénales, qui se terminent souvent tard dans la nuit.

5. Dans quelle mesure, selon vous, la stigmatisation du stress et des difficultés professionnelles des juges entrave-t-elle les efforts visant à favoriser le bien-être des juges ?

Il n'y a pas d'efforts des pouvoirs publics visant à favoriser le bien-être des juges. La politique du ministère est de développer leur productivité, notamment en leur fournissant des assistants (« attachés de justice » au nombre de 1600) chargés de les aider dans leur travail, mais cela n'est pas directement destiné à augmenter leur bien-être.

6. Certains types d'affaires (par exemple, les domaines de la pratique juridique où les affaires sont sensibles et très complexes) peuvent-ils présenter un risque plus élevé de stress chez les juges ? Dans l'affirmative, veuillez fournir des détails sur les types d'affaires susceptibles d'être considérés comme présentant un risque plus élevé et expliquer pourquoi.

Les affaires pénales, lorsqu'elles sont médiatisées et que la presse critique le travail des juges.

Cela est particulièrement vrai pour les affaires « politico-financières » impliquant des personnalités, et à propos desquelles les médias et les responsables politiques accusent les juges de faire preuve d'hostilité à leur égard.

C'est aussi le cas des dossiers de criminalité organisée, où l'action des juges est souvent entravée techniquement par de multiples artifices de procédure (requêtes en dessaisissement, en récusation, en annulation de pièces du dossier, questions prioritaires de constitutionnalité (QPC), etc.)

7. Existe-t-il d'autres facteurs contextuels susceptibles d'avoir un impact différent sur le bien-être des juges (par exemple, la juridiction, l'ancienneté ou l'expérience) ? Si oui, pourquoi, à votre avis, ces facteurs pourraient-ils avoir des effets différents dans la pratique ?

Les jeunes magistrats, formés à l'Ecole Nationale de la Magistrature pour rendre des jugements très détaillés et très motivés, sont souvent choqués par les conditions de travail qu'ils découvrent dans leur premier poste, et découragés de ne pas pouvoir faire face au nombre des dossiers qui leur sont confiés.

Certains d'entre eux disent qu'ils n'ont pas choisi ce métier pour faire du travail à la chaîne (assembly-line work).

Les cas de « burn-out » au cours des premières années de fonction d'un juge sont de plus en plus fréquents

A l'autre extrémité du parcours professionnel, dans les cours d'appel et à la Cour de cassation, les mêmes difficultés apparaissent désormais.

III. Mesures existantes pour soutenir et promouvoir le bien-être des juges

8. Selon vous, quelles stratégies personnelles pourraient aider les juges à gérer leur propre stress et leur bien-être au travail ?

Il est malheureusement impossible d'effectuer une séparation claire entre vie professionnelle et vie privée dans le cas des juges, dont la plupart rédige aussi leurs jugements chez eux, le soir ou le week-end, et durant les périodes de vacances (holidays).

Une petite minorité réussit à ne travailler que lorsqu'ils sont au palais de justice, mais cela les contraint à quitter la juridiction très tard le soir.

9. Les institutions judiciaires de votre pays mesurent-elles et contrôlent-elles actuellement les niveaux de stress et de bien-être des juges ? Dans l'affirmative, veuillez préciser ce que cela implique et à quelle fréquence les niveaux sont contrôlés.

NON.

10. Les juges reçoivent-ils une formation sur la manière de préserver leur bien-être ? Dans l'affirmative, veuillez fournir des détails sur cette formation et indiquer à quel stade elle est dispensée.

Il existe des formations à la gestion du stress, auxquelles les juges peuvent s'inscrire s'ils le souhaitent dans le cadre de leur formation continue.

11. De quelle manière les tribunaux de votre pays répondent-ils aux efforts visant à réduire le stress des juges et à favoriser leur bien-être ?

Rien de spécifique n'est fait en faveur des juges. Cependant, il existe des organes compétents pour l'ensemble des personnels (fonctionnaires, greffiers, juges) et qui peuvent être saisis de la question des conditions de travail.

Il s'agit du Comité Social d'Administration (au ministère de la justice et dans chacune des cours d'appel), qui a une formation spécialisée compétente en matière de conditions de travail, d'hygiène et de sécurité, et où les syndicats sont représentés.

S'y ajoutent les psychologues cliniciens, les psychologues du travail et les médecins du travail. Tous peuvent être consultés, s'ils le demandent, par l'ensemble du personnel des juridictions – y compris les juges.

Certaines cours d'appel ont également mis en place des « cellules de prévention des risques sociaux », auxquelles tous les personnels, dont les juges, peuvent signaler les situations difficiles. Ces cellules, composées de représentants de l'administration des juridictions, des psychologues compétents et du médecin du travail, sont très sollicitées.

Le ministère de la justice peut, à la demande des chefs de juridiction, faire réaliser par des psychologues du travail un « diagnostic psycho-social » d'un tribunal.

12. Selon vous, les mesures actuelles pour soutenir et promouvoir le bien-être des juges dans votre pays sont-elles suffisantes ?

NON.

13. Votre pays a-t-il pris des mesures, ou envisage-t-il de prendre des mesures, pour mettre en œuvre la Déclaration de Nauru sur le bien-être des juges ? Dans l'affirmative, veuillez fournir des détails sur les mesures prises ou envisagées.

Pour l'instant, aucune mesure n'est envisagée à ma connaissance. La déclaration de Nauru n'a fait l'objet d'aucun commentaire officiel.

IV. Perspectives d'avenir : solutions et défis potentiels

14. Comment les institutions judiciaires et les tribunaux pourraient-ils mieux soutenir le bien-être des juges dans votre pays afin d'assurer le bon fonctionnement du système judiciaire ?

Le première mesure serait d'augmenter le nombre des juges (cf les chiffres de la CEPEJ, qui révèlent que ce nombre est très inférieur à la moyenne européenne), et de les doter d'outils efficaces pour faire des recherches de jurisprudence et rédiger leurs décisions.

A défaut, il faudrait limiter les contentieux pour réduire le nombre des dossiers.

15. Des stratégies ont-elles été élaborées pour le bien-être des juges, par exemple dans le cadre de la gestion efficace des affaires sensibles et très complexes ?

A titre exceptionnel, lorsque des juges étaient chargés d'affaires particulièrement éprouvantes (dossier de pédophilie avec de nombreuses victimes très jeunes), une cellule de soutien psychologique pour ces juges a été mise en place .

16. Existe-t-il des problèmes ou des défis dans votre pays concernant le développement et la mise en œuvre de telles stratégies au niveau institutionnel et juridictionnel ? Dans l'affirmative, quel type de solutions pouvez-vous proposer pour surmonter ces défis institutionnels et organisationnels ?

Le principal problème est la multiplication des critiques contre les juges, de la part des médias (critique de l'Etat de droit et du pouvoir des juges), ainsi que d'avocats spécialisés en matière pénale.

L'accent est mis par les pouvoirs publics sur la responsabilité et la discipline des juges, ce qui augmente clairement le stress.

Comme les juges peuvent difficilement alerter l'opinion sur leurs conditions de travail, ils sont perçus par le grand public comme des privilégiés, et les responsables politiques, qui leur reprochent souvent d'entraver l'action du gouvernement, ne les soutiennent pas vraiment.

Dans ce climat politique troublé qui se répand en Europe et dans le monde (par exemple aux Etats-Unis), les juges ne sont pas populaires.

17. Existe-t-il des problèmes ou des défis dans votre pays concernant l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre de telles stratégies au niveau individuel ?

Le positionnement très hostile de certains avocats pénalistes, et la déontologie des avocats en général, sont un réel problème.

18. Dans l'affirmative, quel type de solutions pouvez-vous proposer pour surmonter ces défis au niveau individuel ?

Que la mise en cause injustifiée d'un juge, par un avocat ou un responsable politique, donne lieu à des sanctions – ce qui n'est pas le cas actuellement.

19. Souhaitez-vous faire d'autres commentaires sur le bien-être des juges dans votre pays qui n'ont pas été abordés ci-dessus ?

NON

Germany / Allemagne

The following responses are based on the contribution of the German Association of Judges (Deutscher Richterbund).

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

In Germany, judicial well-being is not yet generally and widely recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary. In some of the federal states ("Bundesländer"), however, the judiciary opened counselling services and training programmes to address issues such as stress, pressure and physical health. The German Judges Association recently published an article in its monthly magazine on mental health and psychological stress in the context of criminal justice (Gerdes, DRiZ 2025, 116). So the topic certainly receives more attention nowadays than ten years ago.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

Given the importance of the topic and the fact that there are no comprehensive measures and programs to effectively support judicial well-being and to prevent the negative side effects of stress and dissatisfaction, one cannot probably assume that enough is already being done.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

Judicial work is in itself meaningful and important as it is indispensable to uphold a stable society.

Judicial independence in general enables judges to reconcile their individual work with their conscience (as long as the working conditions do not "drive" a judge to give up on quality standards).

Within the judiciary, there can be – and usually is – a cooperative work atmosphere.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

Judicial work brings with it, and requires from judges, a high level of responsibility. The high responsibility, which is required in each and every case, adds a constant level of stress to judges.

Very generally, each working day judges have to deal with disputes, many of which are fierce and already have been going on for years. Dealing with disputes all day can certainly be more stressful than dealing with positive topics and satisfied business partners or customers. Other factors that significantly contribute to stress and dissatisfaction can be the necessity to handle difficult persons and situations in the courtroom, having to deal with mentally ill parties, receiving public disapproval for judicial decisions (often by the media and/or in social media), facing confrontative lawyers especially in criminal trials, etc.

This high level of stress resulting from judicial work itself is highly increased by negative working conditions, such as excessive workload, constant staff shortages, malfunctioning IT infrastructure and “shabby” working environment, which unfortunately seem to be typical for the judiciary in many countries.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

Judges are expected by society to display a high level of strength and calmness. Moreover, even within the judiciary, there certainly is stigma if colleagues visibly suffer from “stress”. This may prevent affected colleagues from addressing this issue. Especially younger, ambitious colleagues may shy back from admitting being overworked in order not to jeopardize their career prospects.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

Criminal law, family law and guardianship law can present a higher risk of judicial stress, but also complex civil law cases can involve a high level of stress.

In criminal law, higher levels of judicial stress can be triggered by “confrontative” behaviour of defence lawyers in the courtroom, which is more likely to be experienced in high-profile cases such as cases of sexual crimes, murder, but even more so in economic crime cases. Apart from that, the content of certain cases (such as murder, sexual crimes, child abuse and child pornography) as such is already stressful to deal with in detail.

In family law, higher levels of stress do arise from intense disputes between family members, especially when these disputes involve young children.

In guardianship law, judges are required to make decisions that can significantly limit a person’s basic freedoms, such as the physical fixation of a person suffering from a psychiatric disease to prevent self-injuries, within a very short time. Moreover, judges in guardianship law generally have to deal with persons who, due to their age and/or health situation, require external help as they cannot help themselves any longer. Making these decisions upon a “helpless” person and dealing with people in these situations can as such be felt as stressful.

In civil law, large and complex cases that typically occur in courts of higher level and in larger cities often require a multiple of the time that a judge usually has to deal with an individual case. Especially if a lot of such cases are brought to court at the same time (e. g.

“mass proceedings” such as diesel damage cases), they can lead to the fact that a judge is not able to handle his her her caseload any longer.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

Experience can on the one hand help dealing with judicial stress better than at the beginning of a career. On the other hand, since experience comes with a certain age, the personal health situation of a judge can negatively affect this or her ability to deal with everyday stress. And often the experience also comes with a certain inner distancing, which makes the individual case a burden because one has already dealt with cases alike and heard arguments alike ever so often.

Apart from that, the rapidly changing working style from analogue to digital can negatively affect judicial well-being. One of the issues involved is the entire change of how a certain aspect of a judge’s work is dealt with in a digital way; another issue is that for many judges it seems to be much more physically exhausting to stare into the screen for the whole day than to work with paper files, especially if the cases and the types of law require to read and cope with a large amount of text.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

It’s certainly important to maintain sufficient emotional distance from one’s cases without losing the necessary empathy for the individual case and the parties involved. A balance in one’s personal life can also contribute significantly to mental well-being. Ultimately, however, there is no universally applicable recipe for success. Each judge must discover for themselves what they can do to maintain or improve their mental well-being.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

No.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

Yes, more and more such trainings have been conducted in recent years. Such trainings relate, for example, to personal strategies such as building resilience, but may also contain strategies on a professional level, such as how to deal with confrontative behaviour of lawyers and parties. Also, in some court districts, peer-to-peer counselling has been introduced.

Some courts in Germany even provide health related physical trainings, such as yoga, Pilates or muscular training. But unfortunately these programmes are not available on a general level.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

See question 10.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

Not yet. Such measures as described at question 10 should be available to all the judges of all instances across the whole country. Within the judiciary, it should be regarded as "normal" for judges to attend such trainings without being stigmatised, and there ought to be enough training spaces to accommodate all the judges who wish to attend. The reality is that the funds of the judiciary are quite different across the 16 Bundesländer. While the "best practice" examples mentioned above can be found in some of the wealthier parts of Germany, they do not exist in other parts of the country. Very often, the measures taken in a court depend on the inventiveness and open-mindedness of the respective president or court-administration.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

No. In fact, the declaration does not seem to be widely known in my country.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

See above question 12. Moreover, it is indispensable to equip all the courts with an IT infrastructure that enables judges to work smoothly and without delays (technical equipment and professional support staff). Apart from that, constant staff shortages among service personnel are unacceptable for a judiciary as they delay the delivery of justice significantly. Finally, it should be the normal standard for all judges of all instances across the whole country to work with office furniture that supports their health from a modern orthopaedic point of view (desks, chairs etc.). This is now even more important since the digital working style leads to an even more immobilised working position which can affect a judge's health significantly.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

Yes, trainings on these issues do exist, see above question 10.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

See above question 12.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

A main issue is the judiciary's funding. There certainly is not enough funding, not even in wealthier parts of Germany, to equip all the judges with orthopaedic furniture, and to enable all the judges to attend trainings such as the ones mentioned above. Besides, see question 12.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

See above questions 12, 14 and 17. Awareness (of the importance of judicial well-being for the effective delivery of justice), funding (for sufficient staff, IT infrastructure, office furniture, individual counselling and trainings) and acceptance (since maintaining judicial well-being ought to be regarded as normal on an institutional and an individual level within the judiciary) are necessary to overcome those challenges.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

Hungary / Hongrie

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

Yes, it is. In Hungary, the most important provisions are contained in Article XVII (3) and Article XX (1) of the Fundamental Law and, in harmony with these, Act CLXII of 2011 on the Legal Status and Remuneration of Judges (hereinafter referred to as the “Judges Act”).

Pursuant to these provisions, all employees have the right to working conditions that respect their health, safety, and dignity. Section 35 of the Judges Act stipulates that judges shall be provided the conditions necessary to enable them to carry out their duties effectively; that the proportionate workload of judges shall be taken into account; and that judges must receive remuneration that is commensurate with the dignity of their profession and the weight of their responsibilities, and guarantees their independence.

Furthermore, those provisions on a safe working environment which also cover judicial employees are important (in a physical and psychological sense – Section 35 (1) of the Judges Act).

Besides, it is worth mentioning that health preservation is supported, and in this spirit, for example, SZÉP cards are available, and courts may organize open days and sport days; the SZÉP cards are cash benefits that supplement salaries and can mainly be used for recreation. In the context of the extended occupational health screenings, the Curia offers all staff the possibility of an annual very thorough health examination and there is a dedicated gym for all staff in the building.

All court staff (including their family members and relatives) have access to court-run recreation facilities and guest rooms. They can take their holiday at their expense. For many years, all judicial employees and their families have had an opportunity to visit five zoos in Hungary free of charge.

It is closely related to the aforementioned information that the Curia has been classified as a Family-Friendly Place in the category of workplaces. The certification mark recognises the Curia’s commitment to creating and maintaining a family-friendly workplace and its measures taken to this end. To be awarded this certification, institutions must meet a number of criteria aimed at promoting work-life balance and creating a family-friendly environment.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

Yes, I do. As this requires a continuous effort, it is necessary to respond to the needs and challenges that emerge from year to year.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

The provision of a career path/career model (application to higher courts), social esteem, recognition of work and a reward system, supportive working environment, an extensive possibility to work from home, professional development, autonomy, financial security, career, flexible working hours, the possibility of a part-time job for judges with young children, the possibility of study visits to foreign countries.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

A lack of clear boundaries in work-life balance, excessive workloads, the importance/impact of decisions, increased media attention, personal safety concerns, conflicts with colleagues. In some courts, there is a shortage of staff who can support the work of judges.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

There is no available or known data.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

Yes, there are. In all fields of law (criminal, civil, and administrative), there may actually be cases that receive a lot of media attention and therefore entail a lot of stress. Among the former, criminal and family law cases stand out because there is an extremely high level of stress that Hungarian judges are exposed to.

In the criminal field, special mention should be made of crimes against life, sexual offences, and crimes against children, as well as of extremely complex hearings, sometimes with hundreds of defendants and thousands of victims, and similarly complex budget fraud cases.

In the field of civil law, complex compensation cases, medical malpractice cases, and complicated economic cases can be listed here among other cases.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

Yes, there are. The experience gained in the framework of adjudication is certainly one of these contextual factors. The complexity of the cases, the considerable caseload, as well as the need and difficulty to deal with protracted cases should be highlighted in this context. Resolving these cases requires more attention and therefore entail a higher risk of error, as a consequence of which they cause more stress, but at the same time, their solution results in a high level of

professional prestige, a sense of achievement, and self-confidence. It is also important whether a judge delivers judgements as a single judge or in the form of collective adjudication.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

A variety of methods are known. One direct method may be the efficient organization of work with the involvement of professional and administrative support staff, especially in more complex cases (at the Curia, this includes, for example, the system of chief advisers).

As far as other personal strategies are concerned, playing sports and doing a workout can be mentioned, but apart from them, judges may practice yoga and use various meditation techniques on a regular basis.

For many judges, social relationships (family and friend get-togethers or travel) and cultural programmes serve as a source of recreation. Going for regular health check-ups is also particularly important for stress management and well-being at work. With regard to these health check-ups, it should be underscored that the Curia provides them for all employees on an annual basis.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

There is no available or known data.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

Yes, they do. With regard to the well-being of judges, the National Office for the Judiciary (hereinafter referred to as the “NOJ”) organised and still organizes in-person training courses and webinars on the following topics at the Hungarian Academy of Justice:

- Professional Days for the Judicial Coach-Trainer Network (target group: members of the Court Coach-Trainer Network),
- Stress reduction methods in judicial work for administrative leaders (target group: administrative leaders),
- Effective communication and conflict management in and out of the courtroom for judges (target group: judges),
- Effective time management for judges (target group: judges),
- Burnout prevention in judicial work for administrative leaders (target group: administrative leaders),
- Soft skills training for fixed-term judges (target group: fixed-term judges),
- Stress reduction methods in judicial work for judges (target group: judges),
- Burnout prevention in judicial work for judges (target group: judges),
- Effective communication and conflict management in the judicial organisation for administrative leaders (target group: administrative leaders),
- Burnout prevention in judicial work for court leaders (target group: court leaders),

- Leadership training for the presidents of district courts (target group: the presidents of district courts).

These training sessions are held throughout the calendar year in several rotations.

A list annexed to this document offers a detailed overview of the aforementioned training courses.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

The courts are actively contributing to the implementation of efforts by ensuring that their employees have access to the NOJ-run training courses mentioned under the previous point and have an opportunity to participate in them. A list annexed to this document offers a detailed overview of the training courses.

The Curia also attaches importance to training courses on effective communication, conflict management, and effective stress management in the framework of local training, too. The aim is to develop the effectiveness of social skills (communication and conflict management) and individual competences (stress management) during training sessions tailored to small groups, which are problem-focused, solution-oriented, theoretical, and practical, and are based on the participants' activity, autonomy, and integration of their previous experience. Experience gained from the training sessions can be used both at work and in daily life.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

There is no available or known data.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

There is no available or known data.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

It may be worthwhile to periodically assess what additional (or other) measures would be necessary in addition to or instead of existing welfare services.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

Yes, they have. In order to ensure workload measurements and proportionate workloads, the NOJ has established a nationally standardized system of case weights in civil, economic, administrative, labour, and criminal cases [see OBHE Decision No. 51.SZ/2022 (4 June) on the establishment of a Cabinet for Case Weights and OBHE Decision No. 27.SZ/2024 (28 March) on

the establishment of a Cabinet for Civil-Economic-Labour-Administrative Workloads and Case Weights].

In order to deal with sensitive and highly complex cases, the most important tasks are to monitor the system of case weights, to contribute to the preparation of decisions relating to workload measurements, and to develop workload measurements for specific cases.

In addition to the above, there have been initiatives to set up teamwork within the Curia, for example, by involving court secretaries in the processing of “mega” criminal cases. At the Curia, the system of chief advisers provides assistance in this.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

There is no data available, nor is there known data, but it can be noted that the system of case weights mentioned under question 15 cannot provide a comprehensive solution either, because it is static – that is, it is based on the characteristics of the initial document and does not follow changes in the case (for example, a change in the action).

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

There is no available or known data.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

There is no available or known data.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

No.

Data on judicial well-being trainings

Year of training	Date of training	Title of training	Target group	Form of training	Number of participants completing the training
2024	19/01/2024	Professional Day I for the Judicial Coach-Trainer Network	Members of the Judicial Coach-Trainer Network	Webinar	5
	05/02/2024	Stress reduction methods in judicial work for administrative leaders	Administrative leaders	Webinar	7

	28-29.02.2024	Effective communication and conflict management in and out of the courtroom for judges	Judges	In-person	15
	12/03/2024	Effective time management for judges	Judges	Webinar	17
	18/03/2024	Burnout prevention in judicial work for administrative leaders	Administrative leaders	Webinar	6
	29-30.04.2024	Professional Day II for the Judicial Coach-Trainer Network	Members of the Judicial Coach-Trainer Network	In-person	5
	8-9.05.2024	Soft skill training for fixed-term judges - Group 1	Fixed-term judges	In-person	15
	21/05/2024	Stress reduction methods in judicial work for judges	Judges	Webinar	9
	19/06/2024	Burnout prevention in judicial work for judges	Judges	Webinar	13
	05/09/2024	Stress reduction methods in judicial work for administrative leaders	Administrative leaders	Webinar	10
	29-30.10.2024	Effective communication and conflict management in the judicial organization for administrative leaders	Administrative leaders	In-person	11
	18/11/2024	Burnout prevention in judicial work for administrative leaders - Group 2	Administrative leaders	Webinar	5
	19/11/2024	Effective time management for judges - Group 2	Judges	Webinar	17
	19-20.11.2024	Effective communication and conflict management in and out of the courtroom for judges - Group 2	Judges	In-person	17
	25-26.11.2024	Soft skill training for fixed-term judges - Group 2	Fixed-term judges	In-person	13
2025	13-01.01.2025	Effective communication and conflict management in and out of the courtroom for judges - Group 1	Judges	In-person	16
	21/01/2025	Burnout prevention in judicial work for court leaders	Judicial leaders who are judges	Webinar	16
	04-06.02.2025	Leadership training for district court presidents - Group 1	District court presidents	In-person	15
	03-04.03.2025	Soft skill training for fixed-term judges - Group 1	Fixed-term judges	In-person	17
	11-13.03.2025	Leadership training for district court presidents - Group 2	District court presidents	In-person	15
	202503.24	Effective time management for judges - Group 1	Judges	Webinar	16
	04/04/2025	Burnout prevention in judicial work for judges	Judges	Webinar	planned training with 20 participants
	07-09.04.2025	Leadership training for district court presidents - Group 3	District court presidents	In-person	planned training with 21 participants
	14-15.2025	Effective communication and conflict management in and out of the courtroom for judges - Group 2	Judges	In-person	planned training with 20 participants

13-15.05.2025	Leadership training for district court presidents - Group 4	District court presidents	In-person	planned training with 21 participants
22-24.09.2025	Leadership training for district court presidents - Group 5	District court presidents	In-person	planned training with 21 participants
29-30.09.2025	Soft skill training for fixed-term judges - Group 2	Fixed-appointment judges	In-person	planned training with 20 participants
16/10/2025	Effective time management for judges - Group 2	Judges	Webinar	planned training with 20 participants
05-06.11.2025	Effective communication and conflict managemnetn in and out of the courtroom for judges - Group 3	Judges	In-person	planned training with 20 participants
01-03.12.2025	Leadership training for district court presidents - Group 6	District court presidents	In-person	planned training with 21 participants

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?
2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

Over the past decades, there has been growing discussion in Icelandic society regarding the importance of promoting generally well-being in the workplace and measures aiming at the achievement of that goal on the labor market. However, there has been little discussion on the need to support and promote the well-being of judges as a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary.

Nevertheless, various measures have been taken to support and promote the well-being of judges. According to the Icelandic Judiciary Act No. 50/2016, The Judicial Administration (JA), which is an administrative agency independent of the legislative and executive powers, represents the courts' joint administration. Among other tasks the JA decides upon various issues which may have impact on the well-being of judges on the workplace in the courts as well as other employees there. For instance the JA organises continuing education for judges and other employees in the service of the courts. In this respect it is considered important for the well-being of judges that they are offered possibility to enhance their knowledge for further development in their work with continuing education. Accordingly, judges are given the option of a study permit up to 6 months to which they are entitled on a salary. Furthermore, they are entitled to an annual payment from the Judges' Vocational Education Fund to cover the costs of courses, seminars and conferences.

Judges are also eligible for various financial support from funds, for example related to health issues, such as psychological support or for sports activities. It should also be noted that the salaries of judges in Iceland are generally good and in line with their position among the highest state officials and the responsibility that comes with the job.

The Judicial Administration has adopted policy and response plan on bullying, sexual and gender-based harassment and violence in the workplace. This plan provides for an independent professional council of three members that will address the issues that may arise in the courts. The plan is introduced and regularly discussed in the forum of judges and other employees of the courts.

As regards the work-load of judges the Judiciary Act provides that cases shall be equally distributed to the judges at each court. Accordingly, when assigning cases to the various judges

or chambers, the chief judge of the court shall attempt to maintain, as far as possible, an even workload among them, at the same time endeavouring that the identity of the judge given each assignment is solely subject to chance.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?
4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?
5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?
6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?
7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

These questions are difficult to answer on behalf of all judges. Furthermore, the answers vary depending on which court level one is appointed. Accordingly, the nature of judicial stress and work challenges may be very different on the district court level compared to the appellate level. As the author of the answers to this questionnaire is a judge in the Supreme Court they can only be based on that background and personal experience and only on speculations with respect to judges in general.

The positive features of judicial work, could be that judges might experience satisfaction and well-being from the fact that his/her work is contributing to a final decision and ending a dispute which may have good impact, not only for the parties of the case, but also leading to positive progress in society such as enhancing rights. The negative features, could be that the law is not perfect and does not solve all issues. Formal flaws in the litigation regarding procedural issues may also lead to conclusions such a dismissing a case, so the litigation is futile from the start.

Generally, one could say that some cases are more likely than other to present a higher risk of judicial stress. This would apply for instance to criminal cases or other cases where children are victims or involved in a sensitive family case such as regarding custody dispute. So, complicated case are not necessarily as such the most likely to create judicial stress.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.
10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.
11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?
12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?
13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

A general answer to the questions in this section would be that no specific steps have been taken in this respect. There is no system in place monitoring regularly the level of judicial stress and well being. The solution for each judge would therefore depend on each individual who can always seek assistance on personal problems related to his work. This would be done with the chief judge at the relevant court or in co-operation with the Judicial Administration.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?
15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?
16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?
17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?
18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?
19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

The same general answer would apply here as in Section III regarding existing measures. No specific strategies have been elaborated on the well-being of judges in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex case. As yet, there appears not be a pressing need for such strategy in Iceland. For instance, such issues have not been raised or tackled specifically

in the forum of the Association of Icelandic Judges and there have not been complaints from individual members or in meetings of the Association or general meetings of judges with the Judicial Administration. However, if the need arise the subject will be discussed. For instance following the adoption of the CCJE Opinion No. 28 (2025) on judicial well-being in its meeting in November, it will be introduced and distributed to all members of the Association and published on its website, as other CCJE Opinions. Furthermore the newly adopted UN resolution of 4 March 2025 which proclaims that 25 July of each year shall be the International Day for Judicial Well-being was released on the website of Association of Icelandic Judges. This will hopefully lead to increased discussion and awareness of the importance of judicial well-being among Icelandic judges and society in general.

Ireland / Irlande

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

The Judicial Council of Ireland adopted a Commitment to Judicial Wellbeing at its plenary session in January 2025. This commitment made reference to the Nauru declaration on Judicial Well-being. The Judicial Council, as an institution and as a collection of the individual members of the judiciary agreed to

- a) Empower the Judicial Welfare Committee to promote judicial well-being through raising awareness and by providing for access to internal and external health and well-being supports.*
- b) To develop accessible and transparent assistance and intervention pathways for judges in terms of illness, bereavement or other crises including those which may arise from the inherent demands of judicial work which also includes working with difficult subject matter with the support of the Board of the Judicial Council and the Chief Justice and Court Presidents*
- c) To respond to occupational training and development needs by identifying and providing opportunities to enhance skills with the support of the Judicial studies Committee where appropriate.*

This represents recognition at the highest level that judicial well-being is an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary.

At the end of 2024 the Judicial Welfare Committee launched an extension of an Employee Wellbeing Support App used by Courts Service (public servants) to the judiciary (who are not employee but office holders). This App addresses wellbeing issues under a wide variety of headings including diet, mental/physical health, physical activity, mindfulness and it does so in a wide variety of ways: live/recorded physical training such as circuit training, yoga and pilates, large number of podcasts, mindfulness practices, recipes, information on mental/physical health. It also provides for a free and confidential counselling service (with some limited exceptions).

Prior to this issues about wellbeing had been more ad hoc. There has however been ongoing work done on behalf of the judiciary by the Association of Judges in Ireland with regard to security issues in courtrooms and their environs. Furthermore, the Judicial Studies Committee has a formal mentoring process for new members of the judiciary.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

We are at the beginning of a process addressing wellbeing. This is a work in progress.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?]
There is a lot of resilience in the Irish judiciary based upon a) the high level of public service commitment that members of the judiciary have b) the reasonably high level of trust and confidence that the public has in the judiciary c) that generally speaking, the terms and conditions of the work of judges reflect the importance of their status in society d) the opportunity for meeting with colleagues on a reasonably regular basis (even those in rural and outlying areas have regular opportunities to meet at National/Jurisdictional conferences).
4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?
High caseload. Depending on the court jurisdiction that can be a high turnover of cases which can involve long days sitting in court or in other cases can involve backlogs in outstanding reserved judgments which must be written and delivered. In more recent times, security in court has become another issue as has, for some judges at least, social media spotlighting of certain judges and their decisions.
5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?
This appears to have been an issue and may well be still an ongoing one. With the help of Court Presidents and the new awareness of and focus on wellbeing, it is anticipated that judges may find it easier to be able to discuss these matters with colleagues/President.
6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?
There are some types of cases which are more likely to places judges at risk of higher stress. From an informal survey, it seems that child sexual abuse cases, tragic/fatal cases, family law/childcare cases and criminal cases are the most challenging in this regard. The evidence can be harrowing to listen to in these cases and also in child care cases in particular the decision making may be difficult where so much is at stake.
7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?
Travelling issues for judges who have to attend at a variety of courthouses far away from their home can be an issue for some. This is especially so at the District Court level (the most local and limited court jurisdiction).

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?
9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

Not at present. The Judicial Welfare Committee is involved in strategic planning at present and this may feature in future activities.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.
An introduction session was offered to all judges with respect to the use of the Wellbeing App. There is no formal training at present but active consideration is being given to this and especially to introducing this at induction stage for judges
11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?
See above
12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?
Not at present but there are steps being taken
13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.
See above

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?
This is a factor which is being addressed at present. It will involve leaders within the judiciary upskilling themselves on the need for steps to be taken to look after judicial wellbeing and the type of steps that must be taken if wellbeing is to be fostered. Being open to different kinds of strategies to reach as many judges as possible will be required.
15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?
In some areas groups of judges have worked out strategies on an informal basis as to how to deal effectively with sensitive/highly complex cases. Promoting strategies on a wider basis will be considered as the Judicial Welfare Committee moves on with its work.
16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?
At present no particular difficulties have presented themselves as the senior leadership within the judiciary have been very supportive
17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?
This remains to be seen. Ideally all judges would be "on board" but some judges may not wish to engage with this issue at all
18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?
To be worked out.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

Good self-awareness by judges may assist in managing wellbeing. Knowing one's own reaction to warn signs for stress is a good sign. Generally keeping fit as fit as one's health allows, resting and eating well will assist. Being as social as is comfortable is also a good start. Engaging in various judicial training courses to ensure insofar as is possible that judicial skills are up to date may also help.

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

Yes, judicial well-being is increasingly recognized as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the Judiciary in Italy. While it's a relatively recent focus, there's growing awareness and action at various levels:

Recognition and Implementation:

- High Council of the Judiciary (Consiglio Superiore della Magistratura - CSM) and Judicial Well-being Initiatives
- The CSM, as the self-governing body of the Judiciary, is increasingly acknowledging the importance of judicial well-being. Discussions and initiatives are underway to address stress and workload issues. A specific discipline on organizational well-being within judicial offices was first introduced by the CSM in a resolution of January 25, 2017 (Circular on the preparation of organizational charts of judicial offices for the three-year period 2017/2019).
- Title IV, "On organizational well-being, parental protection and health," is thus regulated, introducing within the Circular on the judicial charts—which governs the entire organization of all judicial offices from the first instance to the Court of Cassation—some rules of principle aimed at ensuring the physical, psychological, and social well-being of judges (Chapter I, Preliminary Provisions, and Chapter II, On organizational well-being, Articles 271-276).
- The CSM recognizes that, to ensure the development and efficiency of the administration of justice, the emotional conditions of the working environment and the existence of a positive organizational climate constitute elements of fundamental importance, capable of fostering the improvement of working environments and positively affecting the effectiveness of judicial performance, the development of professional and productivity levels. It is therefore deemed necessary to create the specific conditions that can affect the improvement of the internal social system, interpersonal relations, and, in general, organizational culture.
- For the first time, the responsibility is expressly placed on the head of the office to act not only to achieve efficiency and productivity goals, but also to maintain the mental and physical well-being of judges by establishing working environments and relationships that contribute to the improvement of the quality of their professional life (Article 274).
- The head and chamber presidents have the duty to know in depth and consistently the concrete situation of the working environment and, in particular, the attitude of professional relations among judges, in order to prevent or resolve any potential or current conflict. Mediation and conciliation skills, therefore, are valued as a prerequisite for a peaceful and

positive working environment (Art. 276). Participation in organizational choices and organizational and innovation projects is also emphasized (Art. 275).

- In this context, provisions for the protection of the family unit are then brought back to unity and systematized (Chapter III, Protection of Parenting and Illness, Art. 277-283), prescribing that organizational measures must take into account the state of pregnancy, maternity, paternity—with particular reference to the conditions of those who take care of minor children, even if not exclusively or predominantly, and up to six years of age—and illness of magistrates.
- Specific protection is also provided for judges who have proven health reasons that may prevent them from performing certain office activities or who are parents of disabled children or who otherwise assist a disabled family member, verified in accordance with Law No. 104 of February 5, 1992.
- In identifying the specific ways in which the relevant provisions are to be implemented in practice—without prejudice to the prohibition on the granting of work assignments during the period of maternity, paternity, or parental leave (Art. 281)—heads of offices are guided by criteria of organizational flexibility (Art. 278). The rule then provides, by way of example, certain organizational measures in the civil (Art. 279) and criminal (Art. 280) sectors, as well as the possibility of temporary assignment to another sector or section (Art. 282).
- These provisions were gradually reproduced and enriched in subsequent decisions until the latest ones (Circular June 26, 2024, as amended on October 9, 2024, for the next period 2026/2029)[1].
- By its resolution of October 31, 2017, almost one year following the adoption of the revised circular regarding judicial office organization, the Council of the Judiciary, under the rubric "organizational well-being, protection of parenthood, and health," allocated, for the first time, Title IV of the provision to the articulation of organizational measures designed to safeguard the physical, psychological, and social well-being of magistrates.
- Subsequently, the Council commenced a verification of the practical application of these organizational measures by Heads of Offices, achieved through the completion of a questionnaire structured into two distinct sections: the first pertaining to the protection of the physical and psychological well-being of magistrates, and the second concerning the protection of parenthood and health[2].
- The resolution of June 18, 2018, analyzes the results of the monitoring. The underlying principle, as reflected in the provisions of the Circular on the formation of judicial office organization, is the recognition that organizational measures designed to ensure an adequate quality of professional life and working conditions that respect the needs associated with parenthood and illness positively influence magistrate productivity and, consequently, the overall effectiveness of judicial activity. Therefore, the Council conducted monitoring to verify the implementation of these measures within judicial offices.
- Regarding measures aimed at ensuring physical and psychological well-being, the monitoring revealed that most offices have taken action, employing tools to enhance magistrates' skills in office organization by involving them in relevant decisions; to promote participation in innovation projects; to ensure equitable workload distribution; to resolve

conflicts; and to create structures that improve physical and psychological well-being, such as nurseries and legal libraries.

- The analysis further indicates a growing trend towards using participatory methods in organizational decision-making to achieve office objectives. This includes meetings for office organization and jurisprudential discussions, the establishment of technical working groups and commissions for specific areas like digitalization and the office of the process, the adoption of standardized procedural templates, and the ongoing review of workflows.
- However, a significant common finding is the resource and logistical constraints faced by most offices. This situation not only leads to many magistrates working in challenging conditions but also impedes the implementation of effective measures to improve professional life quality, such as establishing nurseries.
- Concerning the protection of parenthood and health, the monitoring showed that the tools employed affect the number of hearings or assignments and the methods of conducting hearings in the civil sector. In the criminal sector, adopted measures include temporary assignments to single-judge functions and exclusions from urgent shifts.
- Furthermore, by resolution of July 3, 2019, a questionnaire was approved and distributed to heads of prosecutorial offices to verify the practical implementation of organizational measures aimed at ensuring magistrates' physical, psychological, and social well-being, as mandated by Article 24 of the Circular on the organization of prosecutor's offices, which references the corresponding provisions of the circular on judicial office organization.
- The questionnaire comprises two sections: the first focuses on the protection of magistrates' physical and psychological well-being, and the second on the protection of parenthood and health. The initial section aims to determine the specific organizational measures implemented to enhance magistrates' professional quality of life. The second section investigates organizational measures related to flexibility and case assignment procedures during parental leave.
- The resolution of January 15, 2020, presents and analyzes the data derived from the organizational well-being monitoring conducted at prosecutorial offices. Notably, upon reviewing the investigation's findings, the decision was made to continue the verification process. This ongoing effort seeks to identify best practices and potential organizational improvements, and will be conducted in collaboration with the School of the Judiciary to provide relevant training for magistrates.
- The commitment to protecting well-being is reaffirmed in the new Circular on the formation of organization tables for judging offices for the four-year period 2026/2029. (Resolutions of June 26, 2024, and October 9, 2024)

[1] <https://tinyurl.com/589anbjw>

[2] <https://tinyurl.com/4tkpfj2t>

- Italian School of the Judiciary:
Many courses have been organized by the Italian School of the Judiciary focusing on the well-being of workers in general and magistrates in particular. Among the

most recent, the course on *'The work of the magistrate: from the judicial system to organizational well-being,'* organized by the School on March 18-20, 2024¹.

- Associazione Nazionale Magistrati (ANM):
 - The ANM actively advocates for the well-being of its members.
 - They raise awareness about the challenges faced by judges and push for reforms to improve working conditions.
 - They organize conferences, and discussions about the wellbeing of the judges².

¹ In the introduction to the course you can read that law no. 71 of 2022 contains the reform of the judicial system and the CSM (Superior Council of the Judiciary). Alongside the introduction of new, immediately binding rules regarding organizational, disciplinary matters, the eligibility and reassignment of magistrates, and the constitution and functioning of the Superior Council of the Judiciary, the law includes a broad delegation to the Government to reform the entire system.

In addition to the status of magistrates, the reform affects the organization of jurisdictional offices and seat incompatibility, the functions of the Higher School of the Judiciary, the disciplinary offenses of magistrates, whose list is expanded with new conducts and in relation to which two new institutions are introduced: the extinction of the offense and rehabilitation, the transition from judging to prosecuting functions and vice versa. Specific provisions also concern the efficiency of the judicial system and the swift resolution of disputes.

A preliminary study of the discipline and limits of the transition from judging to prosecuting functions and vice versa will be attempted, a subject of study by the Third Commission of the CSM.

An extensive session will address the issue of workplace well-being within organizations, which is closely dependent on the modalities of leadership and the model of authority represented in decision-making moments that reverberate in the network of daily relationships within the work environment.

Well-being, expressly regulated by the CSM, as a characteristic of the organization, expresses the search for a stable balance in horizontal and vertical relationships within the office.

It concerns the capacity of an organization to promote and maintain the highest degree of physical, psychological, and social well-being of workers in every type of occupation, for all levels and roles, through the instruments of 'motivation,' 'collaboration,' 'involvement,' 'participation in choices and decisions,' and 'flexibility,' so that the mental and physical well-being of workers translates into satisfaction for users and, as an ultimate goal, an increase in productivity.

Factors that create stress, such as unsustainable workloads, difficulties in keeping pace with regulatory and technological evolution, the need to organize one's work to ensure a reasonable duration of proceedings, difficulties in reconciling work and personal life, lack of resources, and relational criticalities, work in the opposite direction.

The attention of the judiciary has traditionally been directed towards the managerial aspects of the organization, through often divergent perspectives: on one hand, the need for technological innovation, and on the other, as evidenced by the latest resolutions of the Superior Council of 2023, the defense of the dignity of the magistrate's work and the demand for manageable workloads.

The managerial approach assimilates the justice-service to a process capable of guaranteeing an evaluable product and proposes a change of perspective: judicial activity is inserted into the relationships that the judicial organization maintains with the subjects interested in the justice-product, with users first and foremost. This progressive change produces pressure on the body of human relations among operators, not easily sustainable without adequate training. There is a strong reluctance on the part of the Italian magistrate to change their DNA, shifting the perspective of the judge, who traditionally identifies the position of a person behind every dispute, trial, or request, towards a managerial culture, focused on results, flows, and performances. This contrast is even more evident in some sectors (family, international protection, fundamental rights), where the ability to empathize with another person is required, as a philosophical and legal element that adds to reason and logic.

The course aims to examine the most interesting and current issues of the subject (organizational themes, professional evaluations, conferral of managerial and semi-managerial positions, disciplinary responsibility, magistrate mobility, extra-judicial assignments, gender equality, institutional communication), but above all to explore the compatibility between the scrupulous observance of rules and the compassion generated by facts, all in respect to the new productivity standards required by the PNRR and the parameter of organizational well-being.

² See, inter alia, <https://www.magistraturaindipendente.it/tecniche-linguistiche-per-il-benessere-organizzativo.htm>
https://www.questionegiustizia.it/articolo/benessere-organizzativo-e-tutela-della-genitorialita-i-rischi-di-una-disciplina-a-meta_05-03-2018.php
<https://www.giustiziainsieme.it/it/ufficio-del-processo-e-organizzazione-della-giustizia/508-benessere-organizzativo-l-iniziale-diffidenza-la-prudente-attuazione-i-sorprendenti-effetti>
<https://www.magistraturademocratica.it/articolo/la-cultura-organizzativa-presa-sul-serio/>
<https://www.associazionemagistrati.it/doc/2903/linee-dazione-per-la-tutela-della-sicurezza-e-della-salute-dei-magistrati.htm>

- Individual Courts and Judicial Offices:
 - While not uniform, some individual courts and judicial offices are taking steps to address well-being concerns.
 - This may involve informal support networks, discussions among colleagues, and efforts to improve local working conditions.
- Academic and Legal Discourse:
 - There's a growing body of academic and legal discourse on the topic of judicial well-being in Italy.
 - This reflects a broader recognition of the psychological and emotional demands of the judicial role.
- Level of Recognition:
 - The recognition is growing at the institutional level (CSM, ANM), but also at the individual and professional level.
 - The awareness is increasing, and the need for action is being discussed more and more.
- How it is done:
 - Through increased discussions, conferences, publications, and some localized actions.
 - There is still a lot of work to do, to provide a structured and national approach.

Factors Driving Recognition:

- Increased Stress and Burnout:
 - The high workload and demanding nature of the judicial role have led to increased stress and burnout among judges.
- Impact on Decision-Making:
 - It's recognized that stress and burnout can negatively impact judges' ability to make sound and impartial decisions.
- Need for a Sustainable Judiciary:
 - There's a growing understanding that a healthy and well-supported Judiciary is essential for the long-term functioning of the justice system.

While progress is being made, there's still a need for more comprehensive and coordinated efforts to fully address judicial well-being in Italy.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the Judiciary?

In my opinion, considerable efforts have been dedicated to enhancing the understanding and awareness of judges' well-being, yet its effective implementation remains a challenge.

- Inconsistent Implementation:
 - While awareness is growing, the implementation of well-being strategies is inconsistent across the country.

<http://www.giudicedonna.it/2017/numero-uno/articoli/Il%20benessere%20organizzativo%20e%20la%20tutela%20della%20genitorialit%C3%A0%20e%20della%20salute.pdf>
<https://www.dirittogiustiziaecostituzione.it/il-modello-di-dirigente-dellufficio-giudiziario-prima-parte-di-roberto-carrelli-palombi/>
<https://journals.uniurb.it/index.php/dsl/article/view/2012>
<https://www.scuolamagistratura.it/documents/20126/1cadb582-f237-5794-2222-78030d554da9>

- There's a lack of a standardized, nationwide approach.
- Resource Limitations:
 - Adequate resources, including funding for psychological support, training, and organizational improvements, are still lacking.
 - This limits the ability to implement effective well-being programs.
- Cultural Barriers:
 - The persistence of stigma surrounding mental health within the legal profession hinders judges from seeking help.
 - A cultural shift is needed to normalize discussions about well-being.
- Workload Pressures:
 - The excessive workload remains a major challenge.
 - While discussions about workload reduction are ongoing, concrete and effective legislative and organizational reforms are still needed.
- Preventive Measures:
 - More emphasis needs to be placed on preventive measures to address stress and burnout before they escalate.
 - Proactive strategies, such as regular check-ins and early intervention programs, are crucial.
- Monitoring and Evaluation:
 - There's a need for more robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of well-being initiatives.
 - Data-driven solutions are essential for continuous improvement.

Implications for the Judiciary:

- When judges are stressed and burned out, their ability to make fair and impartial decisions can be compromised.
- This can undermine public trust in the justice system.
- A healthy and well-supported Judiciary is essential for upholding the rule of law and ensuring access to justice.

While there are positive trends, more substantial and coordinated efforts are needed to prioritize judicial well-being in Italy.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

In my opinion, there are several positive features of judicial work in Italy that can contribute to judges' satisfaction and well-being. These aspects, when properly nurtured, can provide a strong sense of purpose and fulfillment:

- Upholding the Rule of Law:
 - The fundamental role of a judge in ensuring justice and upholding the rule of law is a source of profound satisfaction.
 - The ability to contribute to a fair and equitable society is a powerful motivator.
- Intellectual Stimulation:
 - Judicial work involves complex legal analysis, critical thinking, and problem-solving.
 - This intellectual engagement can be highly stimulating and rewarding.
- Making a Difference:
 - Judges have the power to make a real difference in people's lives by resolving disputes and ensuring justice.

- This sense of impact can be a significant source of satisfaction.
- Independence and Impartiality:
 - The independence and impartiality of the Judiciary are core values that provide judges with a sense of autonomy and integrity.
 - The ability to make decisions without undue influence is a source of professional pride.
- Contributing to Social Order:
 - By maintaining social order and resolving conflicts, judges play a vital role in society.
 - This contribution to the stability and well-being of the community can be deeply satisfying.
- Continuous Learning and Development:
 - The law is constantly evolving, requiring judges to engage in continuous learning and development.
 - This pursuit of knowledge and professional growth can be highly enriching.
- Public Service:
 - The sense of serving the public, and helping people, is a strong motivator.
- The sense of closure:
 - The ability to bring closure to complex situations, and to provide answers, is a positive aspect of the job.

These positive features, when balanced with effective stress management and support systems, can contribute to a fulfilling and meaningful career for judges in Italy.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

In my opinion, several negative features of judicial work in Italy can contribute to stress and dissatisfaction among judges:

- Excessive Workload:

The sheer volume of cases, often coupled with limited resources, leads to an overwhelming workload.

 - This can result in long hours, pressure to meet deadlines, and a sense of being constantly overwhelmed.
- Slowness of Proceedings:
 - The slow pace of the Italian judicial system can be frustrating for judges, litigants, and the public.
 - This can lead to a sense of futility and a feeling that justice is delayed.
- Bureaucratic Hurdles:
 - Complex administrative procedures and bureaucratic red tape can add to judges' workload and create unnecessary stress.
 - This can detract from the core judicial function.
- Lack of Resources:
 - Insufficient funding, staffing shortages, and outdated technology can hinder judges' ability to perform their duties effectively.
 - This can lead to frustration and a sense of being unsupported.
- Pressure and Public Scrutiny:
 - Judges often face intense pressure from the media, politicians, and the public.
 - This scrutiny can be particularly stressful in high-profile cases.

- Emotional Toll:
 - Handling sensitive and traumatic cases, such as those involving violence, abuse, or organized crime, can take a significant emotional toll.
 - This can lead to vicarious trauma and burnout.
 - Lack of Recognition and Support:
 - Judges may feel that their work is undervalued or that they lack adequate support from the system.
 - This can lead to feelings of isolation and disillusionment.
 - Security Concerns:
 - Especially in cases involving organized crime, judges can have real concerns for their personal safety.
 - The feeling of powerlessness:
 - The feeling that even with the best intentions, the system does not allow for a just and fast resolution of the cases, creates a feeling of powerlessness.
- These negative features can create a challenging and stressful work environment for judges, impacting their well-being and the effectiveness of the Judiciary.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

In my opinion, stigma around judicial stress and work challenges significantly hinders efforts to support judicial well-being in Italy. It's a substantial obstacle, and here's why:

- Reluctance to Seek Help:
 - Judges, like many professionals, may fear that admitting to stress or mental health struggles will be perceived as weakness or incompetence.
 - This fear leads to reluctance to seek help, even when it's needed.
 - Professional Image:
 - The judicial profession is often associated with strength, objectivity, and impartiality.
 - Judges may feel pressure to maintain this image, even when they're struggling.
 - Fear of Career Repercussions:
 - Judges may worry that seeking help could have negative consequences for their careers, such as being passed over for promotions or assignments.
 - This fear can be particularly strong in a hierarchical system.
 - Isolation and Lack of Support:
 - Stigma can create a sense of isolation, making judges feel that they're alone in their struggles.
 - This can prevent them from seeking support from colleagues or professional associations.
 - Underreporting of Stress:
 - Stigma can lead to underreporting of stress and burnout, making it difficult to accurately assess the extent of the problem.
 - This can hinder efforts to develop effective well-being programs.
 - Hindering Open Dialogue:
 - The stigma factor, hinders open dialogue about the problems, and therefore makes it harder to create solutions.
- Impact on Well-being Initiatives:
- Stigma can undermine the effectiveness of well-being initiatives by discouraging judges from participating.
 - It can create a culture of silence, where judges suffer in isolation.

Overcoming Stigma:

- Addressing stigma requires a cultural shift within the judicial system.
- This can be achieved through:
 - Leadership from senior judges and court administrators.
 - Awareness campaigns and educational programs.
 - Confidentiality guarantees for well-being services.
 - Creating peer support networks.

In essence, stigma creates a significant barrier to judges seeking the support they need, which ultimately affects the overall effectiveness and well-being of the Judiciary.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

Yes, there are indeed certain case types in Italy that present a higher risk of judicial stress due to their sensitive nature and high degree of complexity. Here are some key examples:

- **Organized Crime Cases:**
 - These cases often involve complex investigations, extensive evidence, and high-profile defendants.
 - Judges may face threats to their personal safety and experience intense pressure from organized crime groups.
 - The emotional toll of dealing with violent crimes and criminal networks can be significant.
- **Cases Involving Child Abuse and Sexual Violence:**
 - These cases are emotionally charged and can be deeply distressing for judges.
 - The need to review graphic evidence and hear testimony from traumatized victims can lead to vicarious trauma.¹
 - The responsibility of protecting vulnerable children adds to the emotional burden.
- **Cases Involving Domestic Violence:**
 - These cases often involve complex dynamics and emotional turmoil.
 - Judges must navigate conflicting accounts and make difficult decisions that can have significant consequences for victims and families.
 - The repetitive nature of these cases can also cause extra stress.
- **Terrorism Cases:**
 - These cases involve national security concerns and can generate intense public scrutiny.
 - Judges may face pressure to make swift decisions in the face of potential threats.
 - The complex international nature of some of these cases adds to the difficulty.
- **Environmental Crime Cases:**
 - These cases can be very complex, involving a lot of technical information.²
 - Often these cases involve powerful economic interests, that can put pressure on the judges.
- **High-Profile Corruption Cases:**
 - These cases often involve political figures and powerful individuals, leading to intense media attention and public scrutiny.
 - Judges may face pressure from various stakeholders and experience threats to their reputation.
- **Cases Involving Asylum and Immigration:**
 - These cases often involve very vulnerable people, and complex international law.

- The human factor in these cases, can cause a lot of emotional stress.
 - Why These Cases Present Higher Risk:
 - Emotional Burden:
 - These cases often involve traumatic experiences and human suffering, which can take a significant emotional toll on judges.
 - Complexity and Length:
 - These cases tend to be complex and lengthy, requiring extensive investigation, analysis, and decision-making.
 - Security Concerns:
 - Some cases involve threats to judges' personal safety, creating a heightened sense of stress and anxiety.
 - Public Scrutiny:
 - High-profile cases attract intense media attention and public scrutiny, adding to the pressure on judges.
 - Ethical Dilemmas:
 - These cases can present complex ethical dilemmas, requiring judges to make difficult decisions that can have far-reaching consequences.
- These factors contribute to a higher risk of judicial stress and burnout, highlighting the need for targeted support and well-being strategies.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

Yes, several contextual factors can significantly impact judges' well-being in Italy, leading to differential effects based on jurisdiction, seniority, and experience.

1. Jurisdiction:

- Urban vs. Rural Courts:
 - Urban courts, particularly in major cities, often experience a higher volume of cases and more complex litigation, leading to increased workload and stress.
 - Rural courts may face challenges related to isolation, limited resources, and a smaller pool of colleagues for support.
- Regional Differences:
 - Regions with higher rates of organized crime or social unrest may expose judges to greater security risks and emotional trauma.
 - Regions with different levels of economic development or social issues may present unique challenges.
- Specialized Courts:
 - Judges in specialized courts (e.g., labor courts, family courts) may face specific stressors related to the nature of their cases.
 - For example, family court judges may experience high levels of emotional stress due to the sensitive nature of their cases.

2. Seniority and Experience:

- New Judges:
 - New judges may experience anxiety and stress related to the steep learning curve and the pressure to perform well.
 - They may also lack the experience and coping mechanisms to handle difficult cases.
- Experienced Judges:

- Experienced judges may face burnout due to the cumulative effects of years of dealing with stressful cases.
 - They may also feel pressure to maintain a high level of performance and expertise.
- Senior Judges:
 - Senior Judges carry more responsibilities, and often have a higher workload.
 - They are also more exposed to the public eye.
- Mid-Career Judges:
 - These judges may face a mix of the problems of the new judges, and the experienced judges.

3. Case Type and Complexity:

- As previously discussed, certain case types (e.g., organized crime, child abuse) present higher risks of stress.
- The complexity of cases also plays a significant role, with highly complex cases requiring more time, effort, and mental energy.

Why These Factors Have Differential Effects:

- Workload and Resource Allocation:
 - Jurisdictional differences can lead to variations in workload and resource allocation, impacting judges' ability to manage stress.
- Exposure to Trauma:
 - Judges in certain jurisdictions or case types may be more exposed to traumatic experiences, leading to higher levels of emotional distress.
- Social and Cultural Context:
 - The social and cultural context of a jurisdiction can influence judges' experiences and perceptions of stress.
- Experience and Coping Mechanisms:
 - Seniority and experience can influence judges' ability to develop coping mechanisms and manage stress effectively.
- Support Networks:
 - The quality and availability of support networks can vary across jurisdictions and levels of seniority, impacting judges' ability to seek help.

These contextual factors highlight the need for tailored well-being strategies that address the specific challenges faced by judges in different circumstances.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

In my opinion, several personal strategies could help Italian judges manage stress and enhance their well-being. The strategies include:

- Seeking Peer Support: Engaging in regular discussions with colleagues can provide emotional support and a sense of shared experience. Sharing challenges and solutions within a supportive network can be invaluable.
- Physical Activity: Regular exercise is crucial for both physical and mental well-being. Judges should aim to incorporate physical activity into their daily routines.
- Professional Development in Stress Management: Participating in workshops or courses focused on stress management, resilience, and emotional intelligence can equip judges with valuable coping skills.

- **Setting Realistic Expectations:** Judges should strive to set realistic expectations for themselves and recognize that they cannot control every aspect of the judicial process.
- **Taking Regular Breaks and Vacations:** Ensuring to take time away from the workload, and taking vacations, will allow for mental and physical recovery.
- **Prioritizing Work-Life Balance:** Judges should actively seek to establish clear boundaries between their professional and personal lives. This could involve setting dedicated time for hobbies, family, and relaxation.
- **Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques:** Incorporating practices like meditation, deep breathing exercises, or yoga can help judges manage stress and improve mental clarity.
- **Developing Hobbies and Interests:** Engaging in activities outside of work can provide a sense of fulfillment and reduce work-related stress.

By implementing these strategies, judges can proactively manage their stress and enhance their overall well-being, leading to a more sustainable and fulfilling career.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

The systematic and widespread measurement and monitoring of judicial stress and well-being within Italian judicial institutions is not consistently or uniformly implemented across the entire system.

While there are growing awareness and discussions surrounding these issues, a standardized, national approach is still developing.

- **Limited Formal Measurement:**
 - While the High Council of the Judiciary (CSM), the Italian School of the Judiciary and the National Magistrates Association (ANM) acknowledge the importance of judicial well-being, widespread, regular, and formal measurement of stress levels is not a standard practice.
 - There might be localized initiatives or pilot programs within specific courts or regions, but these are not nationally coordinated.
- **Informal Monitoring:**
 - Informal monitoring may occur through discussions within judicial offices, interactions with superiors, and feedback within professional associations.
 - However, this informal monitoring lacks the consistency and objectivity of formal measurement tools.
- **Growing Awareness:**
 - There is a growing recognition of the need to address judicial stress and well-being.
 - Discussions and initiatives are emerging to promote awareness and provide support.
 - There are an increased number of conferences and publications that delve into the psychological aspects of the role of the judge.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

While the importance of judicial well-being is increasingly recognized in Italy, the provision of comprehensive and standardized training specifically focused on maintaining well-being for individual judges is somewhat variable.

Initial Training:

- During the initial training at the *Scuola Superiore della Magistratura* (Italian School of the Judiciary), some aspects related to professional ethics, stress management, and psychological resilience might be addressed. However, a dedicated, in-depth program solely focused on well-being is not always a core component. Recently, as mentioned above, many courses have been organized by the Italian School of the Judiciary focusing on the well-being of workers in general and magistrates in particular. Among the most recent, the course on '*The work of the magistrate: from the judicial system to organizational well-being*,' organized by the Italian School of the Judiciary on March 18-20, 2024³
- Ongoing Training:
 - Ongoing professional development programs offered by the *Scuola Superiore della Magistratura* and other institutions may occasionally include seminars or workshops on topics related to stress management, communication skills, and work-life balance.
 - However, the frequency and availability of these programs can vary.
 - Usually, these courses are not mandatory, and the judges have to decide to participate.
- Professional Associations:
 - The Associazione Nazionale Magistrati (ANM) and other professional associations may organize conferences or seminars that touch upon well-being issues.
 - These initiatives often aim to raise awareness and provide a platform for discussion.
- Limited Specialized Training:
 - There is a growing recognition of the need for specialized training in areas such as psychological resilience, conflict management, and emotional intelligence.
 - However, access to such training may be limited and vary depending on the region and the individual judge's initiative.
- Focus on Legal Skills:
 - Traditionally, the primary focus of judicial training in Italy has been on legal skills and knowledge.
 - While the importance of well-being is increasingly acknowledged, it is not yet fully integrated into the mainstream training curriculum.

In essence, while some training related to well-being may be available, it is not consistently provided, and there is room for improvement in terms of frequency, comprehensiveness, and accessibility.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

Courts in Italy are trying to respond to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being in a variety of ways, though the extent and consistency of these efforts are not yet sufficient.

As already mentioned, there's a growing awareness within the judicial system about the importance of mental health and well-being.

This has led to more open discussions about stress, burnout, and the need for support.

³ See footnote no.2.

Some courts are attempting to improve organizational efficiency to reduce workload pressures. This might involve streamlining administrative processes or improving case management systems.

There are efforts to improve the digitalization of the judicial system, to reduce the time spent on repetitive tasks⁴.

Courts are increasingly collaborating with the Associazione Nazionale Magistrati (ANM) to address well-being concerns.

These collaborations may involve organizing seminars, workshops, or providing resources for judges.

Efforts to Improve Work-Life Balance:

- There are discussions about promoting a healthier work-life balance for judges, though concrete actions may be limited.
 - There are some conversations about flexible working arrangements, where possible.
- Focus on Training and Education:
 - As mentioned earlier, there are efforts to incorporate well-being-related topics into judicial training programs, though more progress is needed.
 - There is increased focus on communication skills, and conflict resolution training, which can help to reduce stress.
- CSM Initiatives:
 - The *Consiglio Superiore della Magistratura* (CSM) is starting to pay more attention to the well-being of the magistrates, even if the actions are still in development.

It's important to note that the response is evolving, and there's a growing recognition that more needs to be done. However, the Italian judicial system is beginning to take steps to address judicial stress and support well-being.

In this direction, an important initiative by the Perugia Public Prosecutor's Office.

"Yoga activities at the Perugia Public Prosecutor's Office": this is the initiative launched few weeks ago, and aimed at all staff, included in the annual program of activities for 2025, with the aim of improving the psychophysical well-being of employees.

⁴ A general overview of the main innovations introduced by the most recent reform, also known as the "Cartabia Amendment," which came into force on November 24th can be useful to understand how the new rules can help in order to reduce the high workload of the Italian judicial system.

The main innovations concern:

- Amendments to Article 38 of the Code of Civil Procedure: The time when judges can declare their own incompetence ex officio is brought forward to avoid delays.
- New provisions for mediation: New rules for civil mediation are introduced to encourage out-of-court settlement of disputes.

The reform has introduced important innovations in the context of the digital transformation of justice, accelerating the ongoing process and aiming to make the judicial system more efficient and transparent.

The main innovations introduced concern:

- Digital criminal proceedings: The reform has made the digital transformation of criminal proceedings mandatory, definitively overcoming the era of paper and bringing the Italian system closer to more modern and streamlined models.
- Electronic case file: A single electronic case file has been introduced, accessible to all parties involved in the proceedings, facilitating the consultation of documents and communication between the parties.
- Native digital documents: The reform encourages the creation of procedural acts directly in digital format, thus avoiding the need to digitize paper documents.
- Telematic communications: Telematic communications between the parties and between the parties and the judge have been enhanced, making processes faster and less tied to physical presence in the courtroom.

Remote hearings: The possibility of holding remote hearings has been expanded, allowing for greater flexibility and accessibility to the judicial system

In the presentation of the important initiative it is underlined how meditation is indeed a powerful tool for developing self-awareness and improving the quality of working life. It helps manage stress, strengthen inner peace and promote positive relationships between colleagues. In a period in which administrative staff are subjected to increasing pressure, this session represented a precious opportunity to find balance and harmony. Stress, in fact, is one of the main problems that affect workers, especially in high-pressure contexts such as the legal one. Deadlines and workloads can quickly accumulate, negatively affecting psychophysical well-being. However, meditation presents itself as an accessible and powerful solution. Even just 10-20 minutes of meditation a day can lead to a significant reduction in stress and improved concentration⁵.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

In my opinion, while there's a growing awareness and some positive steps being taken, the current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in Italy are not yet sufficient.

- Lack of Standardization:
 - The measures implemented vary significantly across different judicial districts, leading to an uneven level of support.
 - A standardized, national approach is needed to ensure that all judges have access to adequate resources.
- Limited Resources:
 - The availability of psychological support services and specialized training programs is often limited.
 - Increased investment in these areas is crucial to address the high levels of stress experienced by judges.
- Insufficient Focus on Prevention:
 - While some efforts focus on addressing stress after it occurs, there's a need for more proactive measures to prevent burnout and promote well-being.
 - This could involve implementing strategies to improve work-life balance, reduce workload pressures, and foster a supportive work environment.
- Training Gaps:
 - While training on well-being is increasing, it's not yet fully integrated into the mainstream judicial training curriculum.
 - More comprehensive and mandatory training programs are needed to equip judges with the skills to manage stress and maintain their well-being.
- Organizational Constraints:
 - The slow digitalization of the system, and the large amount of cases, make it very hard to improve the wellbeing of the judges, without a deep reform of the judicial system.
- Need for Continuous Monitoring:
 - A system for continuously monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of well-being initiatives is essential.
 - This would allow for adjustments and improvements to be made over time.

In conclusion, while the Italian judicial system is moving in the right direction, more substantial and coordinated efforts are needed to ensure that judges have the support they need to thrive. There is a need for a systemic change, and more resources to be provided.

⁵ A comparable project was started by the Treviso Court.

The entire system is, of course, heavily burdened by the substantial workload judges face, which prevents them from having adequate opportunities to rest, recover energy, and thus maintain appropriate serenity in their judgments.

Excessive workload is one of the main causes of stress for Italian judges. This problem is exacerbated by the slowness of proceedings, the accumulation of cases, and staff shortages. The lack of sufficient time to rest and recover energy can negatively impact the mental and physical health of judges, as well as the quality of their decisions.

The importance of reforms:

Legislative and organizational reforms aimed at reducing workload are essential to improve the well-being of judges. These reforms could include:

- Simplification of judicial procedures.
- Increased human and technological resources.
- Improvement of the organization of judicial offices.
- Digitalization of processes.

Reducing the workload would allow judges to have more time to rest, recover energy, and maintain an adequate level of serenity in judging."

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

A definitive, detailed explicit implementation in Italy of the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being is yet challenging.

As known, the Nauru Declaration emphasizes the importance of judicial well-being, recognizing the stresses and challenges faced by judges; it calls for measures to promote mental health, reduce workload, and improve working conditions.

As already mentioned above, Italy is increasingly recognizing the importance of judicial well-being, as evidenced by discussions within the *Consiglio Superiore della Magistratura* (CSM) and the *Associazione Nazionale Magistrati* (ANM)

There is a growing awareness of the need to address stress, burnout, and other challenges faced by judges.

The focus has been on improvements that are in line with the spirit of the Nauru Declaration, such as:

- Workload Reduction: Efforts to streamline judicial processes and improve efficiency. This is a primary concern, and any legislative or organizational reform that reduces the workload, is in line with the declaration.
- Digitalization: Increasing the use of technology to reduce administrative burdens. This is a step to improve working conditions.
- Training and Awareness: Promoting discussions and providing some training on stress management and well-being.
- Organizational improvements: there are efforts to improve the organization of the judicial offices.

It is important to note that the implementation of the Nauru Declaration's principles might occur through broader initiatives aimed at improving the overall functioning of the judicial system, rather than through specific, isolated actions.

Challenges:

The Italian judicial system faces significant challenges, including a high workload and limited resources, which can hinder the implementation of comprehensive well-being measures.

The complexity of the Italian legal system and the need for legislative reforms can slow down progress.

We can say that while there are not specific activities on direct implementation of the Nauru Declaration, Italy is taking steps to address judicial well-being through various initiatives. The focus is on workload reduction, digitalization, and raising awareness. More systemic changes are necessary to fully align with the declaration's principles.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the Judiciary?

To better support the well-being of judges in Italy and ensure the good functioning of the Judiciary, judicial institutions and courts could implement a multi-faceted approach.

The future needs a comprehensive strategy:

1. Implement Formalized Well-being Programs:

- Establish Dedicated Well-being Units: Create units within the *Consiglio Superiore della Magistratura* (CSM) or regional courts to develop and implement well-being programs.
- Regular Well-being Assessments: Conduct anonymous surveys and assessments to monitor stress levels, burnout, and overall well-being.
- Provide Access to Psychological Support: Offer confidential counseling and therapy services, either on-site or through partnerships with external professionals.

2. Reduce Workload and Improve Efficiency:

- Streamline Judicial Processes: Simplify procedures, reduce bureaucratic burdens, and implement case management systems to reduce backlogs.
- Increase Resources: Advocate for increased funding to hire more judges, support staff, and invest in technology.
- Accelerate Digitalization: Fully implement digital platforms for case management, document handling, and communication to reduce administrative burdens.
- Review and Revise Legislation: Identify and address legislative bottlenecks that contribute to excessive workloads.

3. Enhance Training and Professional Development:

- Integrate Well-being Training: Include mandatory training on stress management, resilience, and work-life balance in initial and ongoing judicial training.
- Provide Specialized Training: Offer workshops on conflict resolution, emotional intelligence, and communication skills.
- Promote Peer Support Networks: Facilitate the creation of peer support groups where judges can share experiences and provide mutual support.

4. Foster a Supportive Work Environment:

- Promote Open Communication: Encourage open dialogue about well-being concerns and create a culture of support.
 - Implement Flexible Work Arrangements: Where possible, offer flexible work schedules and remote work options to improve work-life balance.
 - Improve Physical Work Environment: Ensure that court facilities are comfortable, safe, and conducive to well-being.
 - Recognize and Value Judges' Contributions: Implement systems for recognizing and rewarding judges' efforts and achievements.
5. Implement Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms:
- Establish Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Develop KPIs to track the effectiveness of well-being initiatives.
 - Conduct Regular Reviews: Regularly review and evaluate well-being programs to identify areas for improvement.
 - Publish Reports and Data: Share data and reports on judicial well-being to promote transparency and accountability.
6. Strengthen Collaboration and Communication:
- Enhance Collaboration with ANM: Work closely with the *Associazione Nazionale Magistrati* (ANM) to advocate for and implement well-being initiatives.
 - Engage with Stakeholders: Collaborate with legal professionals, academics, and civil society organizations to address well-being concerns.
 - Communicate Effectively: Regularly communicate with judges about well-being initiatives and resources.

By implementing these measures, Italian judicial institutions and courts can create a more supportive and sustainable work environment for judges, ultimately ensuring the good functioning of the Judiciary.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

Yes, while a fully formalized, nationwide strategy specifically labelled “well-being of judges” concerning sensitive and complex cases may not be uniformly implemented, several strategies and practices have been developed and are evolving in Italy to address this critical area.

1. Training and Professional Development:

- Specialized Training on Sensitive Cases: The *Scuola Superiore della Magistratura* (Superior School of the Judiciary) and other institutions offer training programs that address the psychological and emotional challenges of handling sensitive cases, such as those involving:
 - Organized crime
 - Child abuse
 - Domestic violence
 - Terrorism
 - Communication Skills: Training in effective communication skills is provided to help judges navigate complex interactions with victims, witnesses, and defendants.
2. Organizational Support and Resources:
- Team Approach: In some jurisdictions, complex cases are handled by teams of judges and support staff, allowing for shared responsibility and peer support.

- Access to Experts: Courts may provide access to experts, such as psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers, to assist judges in understanding the psychological aspects of sensitive cases.
- Case Management Systems: Efforts are underway to improve case management systems to ensure that complex cases are handled efficiently and effectively.

3. Ethical Guidelines and Protocols:

- Ethical Codes: The ANM has established ethical codes that guide judges' conduct and emphasize the importance of impartiality and professionalism, even in highly sensitive cases.
- Protocols for Sensitive Cases: Some courts have developed specific protocols for handling sensitive cases, outlining procedures for protecting victims, managing evidence, and ensuring fair trials.

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4. Increasing Awareness and Dialogue:

- Professional Associations: The Associazione Nazionale Magistrati (ANM) and other professional associations play a role in raising awareness about the challenges faced by judges handling sensitive cases.
- Conferences and Seminars: Conferences and seminars are held to discuss best practices for handling sensitive cases and to promote dialogue among judges and other legal professionals.

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5. Workload Considerations:

- As discussed previously, the workload is a major issue. Any workload reduction, will help judges to better handle the stress of sensitive cases.

Challenges and Areas for Improvement:

- The availability and consistency of these strategies can vary across different jurisdictions.
- There is a need for greater investment in psychological support services and specialized training programs.
- Further efforts are needed to promote a culture of open communication and support within the Judiciary.

While there is not one single defined strategy, there are many actions taken to help judges handle the stress of sensitive cases, and these strategies are evolving.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

Yes, there are indeed several problems and challenges in Italy concerning the development and implementation of well-being strategies for judges at the institutional and court level. :

Challenges:

- Resource Constraints:
 - Limited funding for training, psychological support, and organizational improvements.
 - Staff shortages, leading to increased workload and stress.
- Organizational Culture:
 - A traditional culture that may not fully prioritize mental health and well-being.
 - Stigma associated with seeking psychological support.
 - Resistance to change and innovation.
- Lack of Standardization:

- Inconsistent implementation of well-being strategies across different courts and regions.
 - Absence of a national, coordinated approach.
- Bureaucratic Hurdles:
 - Slow decision-making processes and bureaucratic red tape.
 - Difficulty in implementing new initiatives and reforms.
- Workload Pressures:
 - Overburdened judicial system, leading to high levels of stress and burnout.
 - Difficulty in finding time for training and well-being activities.
- Digital Divide:
 - The digitalization of the justice system is ongoing, and not all courts are at the same level. This causes stress for those judges who are less familiar with new technologies.

Suggested Solutions:

- Increase Funding and Resources:
 - Advocate for increased budgetary allocations for judicial well-being programs.
 - Prioritize investments in psychological support services, training, and technology.
- Promote Cultural Change:
 - Launch awareness campaigns to reduce stigma and promote a culture of well-being.
 - Encourage open dialogue about mental health and stress.
 - Lead by example, with senior judges and court administrators prioritizing well-being.
- Establish National Standards and Guidelines:
 - Develop national guidelines for judicial well-being programs.
 - Create a central body to oversee implementation and ensure consistency.
- Streamline Bureaucracy:
 - Simplify administrative procedures and decision-making processes.
 - Empower local courts to implement well-being initiatives.
- Address Workload Issues:
 - Implement legislative reforms to simplify judicial procedures.
 - Increase the number of judges and support staff.
 - Improve case management systems and utilize technology to enhance efficiency.
- Enhance Digitalization and Training:
 - Accelerate the digitalization of the justice system.
 - Provide comprehensive training on digital tools and technologies.
 - Offer ongoing technical support to judges.
- Strengthen Collaboration:
 - Foster collaboration between the CSM, ANM, and other stakeholders.
 - Establish partnerships with universities, research institutions, and mental health professionals.
- Implement Monitoring and Evaluation:
 - Develop key performance indicators (KPIs) to track the effectiveness of well-being programs.
 - Conduct regular evaluations and make adjustments as needed.

By addressing these challenges and implementing these solutions, Italy can create a more supportive and sustainable judicial system that prioritizes the well-being of its judges.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

Yes, there are indeed problems and challenges concerning the development and implementation of well-being strategies at the individual judge level in Italy. These challenges often intersect with, but are distinct from, the institutional ones. Here's a breakdown:

Challenges at the Individual Level:

- Stigma and Fear of Vulnerability:
 - Many judges may hesitate to seek help due to the fear of being perceived as weak or incapable.
 - There's often a stigma associated with admitting to stress or mental health struggles within the legal profession.
- Time Constraints and Workload:
 - The heavy workload makes it difficult for judges to prioritize self-care and participate in well-being activities.
 - Finding time for training, therapy, or even relaxation is a constant struggle.
- Lack of Awareness and Skills:
 - Some judges may lack awareness of effective stress management techniques and coping mechanisms.
 - They may not have the skills to recognize and address their own well-being needs.
- Professional Isolation:
 - The nature of the judicial role can lead to professional isolation, making it difficult for judges to seek support from colleagues.
 - This isolation can exacerbate stress and burnout.
- Ethical Concerns and Impartiality:
 - Judges may worry that seeking help could compromise their perceived impartiality or raise ethical concerns.
 - They may fear that their mental health could be questioned in legal proceedings.
- Personal Responsibility vs. Systemic Issues:
 - Some judges may feel that the problem is only a systemic problem, and that their personal actions will not be enough to solve the issue. This creates a feeling of powerlessness.
- Varying Individual Needs:
 - Well-being strategies are not "one-size-fits-all." Individual judges have diverse needs and preferences, making it challenging to implement universally effective programs.

Addressing Individual Challenges:

- Promote Confidentiality and Trust:
 - Ensure that psychological support services are confidential and that judges feel safe seeking help.
 - Build trust through transparent communication and ethical practices.
- Provide Accessible and Flexible Resources:
 - Offer well-being resources that can be accessed online or outside of regular working hours.
 - Provide flexible training options and self-paced learning materials.
- Educate and Empower Judges:
 - Provide training on stress management, resilience, and emotional intelligence.
 - Equip judges with the skills to recognize and address their own well-being needs.
- Foster Peer Support Networks:
 - Create opportunities for judges to connect with colleagues and share experiences.
 - Encourage mentorship and peer support programs.
- Normalize Help-Seeking Behavior:

- Promote a culture that encourages judges to prioritize their well-being.
 - Share success stories and role models who have benefited from well-being support.
- Personalized Well-being Plans:
 - Create personalized well-being plans, that take into consideration the specific needs of each judge.
- Promote work life balance:
 - Encourage judges to pursue hobbies, and spend time with their families.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

To overcome the individual-level challenges judges face in maintaining their well-being in Italy, as mentioned above, combination of targeted solutions is needed. Here are some suggestions we can add to the previous para 17.

1. Destigmatize Mental Health and Promote a Culture of Well-being:
 - Leadership from the Top:
 - Senior judges and court administrators should openly discuss well-being and share their own experiences.
 - This sets a precedent and encourages others to prioritize their mental health.¹
 - Awareness Campaigns:
 - Develop and disseminate educational materials that emphasize the importance of mental health and well-being.
 - Organize workshops and seminars to dispel myths and misconceptions about mental health.
 - Confidentiality Guarantees:
 - Ensure that any well-being services offered are strictly confidential, building trust and encouraging judges to seek help without fear of repercussions.
2. Provide Accessible and Tailored Support:
 - Flexible Access to Services:
 - Offer online counseling and therapy options for judges who may not have time for in-person appointments.
 - Provide access to services outside of regular working hours.
 - Personalized Well-being Plans:
 - Develop individualized well-being plans that address the specific needs and preferences of each judge.
 - These plans could include strategies for stress management, work-life balance, and self-care.
 - Peer Support Networks:
 - Facilitate the creation of peer support groups where judges can share experiences, offer advice, and provide emotional support.
 - These networks can reduce feelings of isolation and foster a sense of community.²
3. Enhance Skills and Knowledge:
 - Mandatory Training:
 - Integrate training on stress management, resilience, and emotional intelligence into mandatory judicial training programs.
 - Provide ongoing professional development opportunities to reinforce these skills.
 - Self-Care Workshops:
 - Offer workshops on mindfulness, meditation, and other self-care techniques.

- Provide practical tools and strategies that judges can incorporate into their daily routines.
- Educational Resources:
 - Develop and disseminate easily accessible resources, such as online guides and articles, on well-being topics.
- 4. Address Workload and Time Constraints:
 - Time Management Training:
 - Provide training on effective time management and prioritization skills.
 - Help judges develop strategies for managing their workload and reducing stress.
 - Encourage Breaks and Vacations:
 - Promote a culture that encourages judges to take regular breaks and vacations.
 - Ensure that judges feel supported in taking time off to recharge.
 - Flexible Work Options:
 - Where possible, offer flexible work arrangements, such as remote work or flexible schedules, to improve work-life balance.
- 5. Foster a Sense of Community and Belonging:
 - Mentorship Programs:
 - Establish mentorship programs that pair experienced judges with newer judges.
 - Mentors can provide guidance, support, and advice on navigating the challenges of the judicial role.³
 - Social Events and Activities:
 - Organize social events and activities to foster a sense of community and camaraderie among judges.
 - These events can provide opportunities for judges to connect outside of the courtroom.

By implementing these solutions, Italy can create a more supportive and resilient judicial workforce, where judges feel empowered to prioritize their well-being.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

Yes, there are a few additional points I'd like to emphasize regarding judicial well-being in Italy, which build upon our previous discussions:

- The Importance of Early Intervention:
 - Preventive measures are crucial. Addressing stress and burnout early on can prevent more serious mental health issues from developing.
 - Regular check-ins and proactive support systems can make a significant difference.
- The Role of Technology:
 - While digitalization can create stress initially, it also offers opportunities for improved efficiency and access to well-being resources.
 - Telehealth services, online training platforms, and digital stress management tools can be valuable assets.
- The Need for Data-Driven Solutions:
 - Collecting and analyzing data on judicial stress and well-being is essential for developing effective strategies.
 - This data can help identify trends, measure the impact of interventions, and inform policy decisions.
- The Interconnectedness of Systemic and Individual Factors:

- It's crucial to recognize that individual well-being is deeply intertwined with systemic factors.
 - Addressing workload issues, improving organizational culture, and providing adequate resources are essential for creating a sustainable environment for judicial well-being.
- The Impact on Public Trust:
 - Judicial well-being is not just a personal matter; it has implications for public trust in the justice system.
 - Judges who are stressed or burned out may be more prone to errors or biases, which can undermine public confidence.
- The long term vision:
 - It is important to create a long term vision about the wellbeing of the judges. This is not a problem that can be resolved in a short amount of time. It requires constant monitoring, and adjustments.
- The importance of the communication:
 - The communication between the judges, the CSM, and the ANM, is very important. It is very important that the judges feel listened to.

By addressing these additional considerations, Italy can take a more holistic and sustainable approach to promoting judicial well-being.

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

The issue of the well-being of judges has come to the attention of the Judicial Council as one of the essential aspects that not only ensures the effective work of the judiciary, but also serves as a measure of the prestige and attractiveness of the judicial profession, so that a talented lawyer chooses the position of judge as his or her life's profession.

Judges completed a survey on the well-being of judges at the end of 2023 and 2024, and the results of the survey were analyzed by the Judicial Council (materials not published). In both years, about 50% of judges participated in the survey, which can be considered a very representative indicator.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

The answer to such an open question cannot be given unequivocally. Using the results of the judges' well-being survey as a basis, it can be generally established that judges themselves have assessed their well-being on a scale (-3 to 3) with +1.46 (2024). Thus, all aspects that affect well-being can be assessed positively overall, while still finding several important conditions that could be improved in the future. However, it is important to note that depending on the instance and the specific court, this assessment ranged from close to 3 to below 1. In the Latvian situation: the higher the instance, the higher the level of well-being. The judicial sector has not made fundamental investments in implementing the prerequisites for the well-being of judges in their daily work in accordance with the latest trends (for example, the relaxation corners created in the private sector today, free snacks, etc.). The entire public sector provides the most comfortable technical support, specifically the aspects related to the performance of work.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

The survey found that the well-being of judges is promoted by contact with the court management and the court staff, which generally characterizes the positive microclimate for those working in the judicial system. The provision of premises is rated very well, and the technical and digital assessment lags behind slightly. The content, accessibility, and choice of lecturers available to judges were also rated relatively well, but there is room for improvement.

The assessment of workload and remuneration on a scale (-3 to 3) does not show particularly positive dynamics, and these two criteria are actually the most important determinants of a judge's career satisfaction.

A relatively large percentage of judges are inherently motivated and interested in working in self-government institutions and indicate a motivation to improve the work of the judicial system. This is at the same time a positive aspect - it indirectly indicates a real opportunity for every judge to get into positions that require systemic thinking, a global approach, and judges are generally ready to get involved in improving the system.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

Several aspects can be noted: unfilled judicial positions (as a result of the selection of judges, the planned number of judges is not selected). Independent problems with the electronic system of courts and an inconvenient (unnecessarily time-consuming) system. Lack of support staff/frequent changes (because the salary is too low).

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

There is no evidence of any unjustified prejudice or stigma on either side (judges and administration). The survey of judges clearly indicates very precise considerations that are well-founded.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

From general observations, family dispute cases, which account for a large percentage of cases in courts, are most often cited as causing stress and additional nervous strain in judges' discussions. Within the framework of such a survey, it is difficult to provide a research- and data-based answer to the reasons for such an assessment. From the discussions, it was often pointed out that the legislator has recognized these cases as being subject to extraordinary deadlines (hence, stress is caused by short deadlines). At the same time, work complications are caused by the emotional atmosphere of family disputes, in which the negative side of adults is observed, which makes children suffer.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

Objective factors of well-being of judges, as already mentioned, are workload and remuneration. There is a pronounced lack of assistant judges in the courts of first instance. In the courts of appeal and the Supreme Court, 3 judges hear cases, as well as assistants are provided (the Supreme Court also has a large number of advisors). Consequently, there are incomparable working conditions, which objectively create different assessments of well-being.

Other considerations (experience in a judge's career, age, etc.) are not primary criteria for drawing conclusions about differences in measuring the well-being of judges.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

If first instance judges, out of their integrity and also in order to strictly adhere to the deadlines set by the legislator for the consideration of certain categories of cases, spend evenings and weekends at work, then only in some cases could it be due to the judge's own inability to plan time or the need to consider cases for longer (lack of experience, additional research on a legal issue needs to be conducted).

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

Please, see the answers above.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

The judge's regular training offer includes several seminars/courses dedicated to this topic. However, independent, systemic work on well-being (for example, an anti-stress lesson once a week) is not offered.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

If this type of support is offered, judges and court employees are responsive. At the same time, it is noteworthy that all judges are provided with health policies that cover the services of a psychologist and psychiatrist, as well as a certain amount of sports/therapeutic massage. Thus, each judge can seek help if necessary and use the resources necessary to improve their health. The Court Administration also has a service agreement with a psychologist who, if necessary, can provide assistance within the judicial system in emergency cases (up to 5 consultations). It has been noted that judges do not particularly often use such an opportunity through the Court Administration, because there is an opinion about the prestige and authority of a judge, independence, which is incompatible with personality problems and vulnerability.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

Support for the well-being of judges is adequate. However, it is essential that the disorganization of the judicial system (lack of judicial support staff, unfilled judicial vacancies) does not create a self-perpetuating emergency and firefighting situation.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

Currently I have no information on measures taken or planned to implement the Nauru Declaration.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

The solutions are clear: improve the remuneration of judicial assistants so that independent, highly competent assistants work in first instance courts. Fill vacant judicial positions. Make the court information system fast, always functional and easy to use.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

There is no specific strategy for such matters. Judges are independent, and the complexity or sensitivity of cases should not dictate strategies/methods for deciding them. All cases must be considered neutral by the judge, and the development of such strategies or guidelines would be considered undue influence on the judge.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

Please, see the answers above.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

The only effective solution is appropriate training, seminars and exercises to promote high-quality adjudication of cases. Such training is carried out independently, and it is the only acceptable format in which judges can be collegially and professionally supported in their daily work.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

Please, see the answers above.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

In fact, if the well-being of judges is discussed, then the emphasis should clearly be placed on first instance judges due to sole decision making. It is important that in Latvia regular (once every 5 years) evaluation of judges is implemented, therefore the working situation of a judge is comprehensively assessed, providing feedback.

Liechtenstein

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

It should be noted in advance that the court system in Liechtenstein is relatively small. In addition to the ordinary court with three instances, the Administrative Court rules on administrative matters and the Constitutional Court acts as an extraordinary court of last instance. The judges at the Constitutional Court, the Administrative Court and the Supreme Court work part-time, while full-time judges work at the Court of Appeal and the first instance court (of which there is only one in Liechtenstein).

In Liechtenstein, judicial well-being is considered an essential factor for a functioning and efficient legal system. Particular attention is paid in the annual allocation of cases to ensuring that the workload in the various court divisions is equally high and that the maximum capacity of the individual judges does not have to be exhausted. In this context, for example, two additional judgeships were created around two years ago in order to cope with the increasing workload.

In addition, the well-being of the individual judges is always discussed in annual meetings with the respective presidents of the courts. Extraordinary burdens on individual judges (e.g. due to prolonged absence due to illness or particularly complex cases) are taken into account by means of appropriate measures such as the imposition of an intake stop in the respective court division concerned.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

Yes.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

In my view, one of the advantages of working as a judge is the far-reaching independence, especially in terms of time management, i.e. that judges can decide for themselves when they work and which cases they deal with when and how. Flexible time management enables judges to achieve the best possible work-life balance and, in my opinion, contributes greatly to their satisfaction.

Full-time judges in Liechtenstein are appointed for an indefinite period, which offers a high degree of career stability and security.

Appropriate remuneration for judicial work also contributes to satisfaction.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

Judges often have to rule on complex, often tragic or stressful cases, such as family, criminal or custody matters. Dealing with human suffering can be emotionally draining, especially when judges feel that their decisions drastically affect people's lives.

The workload can be very heavy. Judges have a large number of cases to deal with and often have to make sound judgments in a short space of time. This can lead to time pressure and a feeling of not having enough time to adequately prepare for each case.

Judges have a great responsibility as their decisions have a significant impact on people's lives and society. They can be criticized for their rulings by the public, the media or even political bodies, which can lead to stress and a feeling of dissatisfaction.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

If stress and mental distress in the judiciary is seen as a “weakness” or something that should not be talked about, it becomes more difficult to address these issues openly. Judges and judicial staff may feel uncomfortable seeking help for fear that their professional integrity or competence may be called into question. This stigmatization prevents them from seeking necessary support, be it through psychological care, supervision or relaxation strategies.

It can be assumed that this may become an issue in individual cases. I cannot say whether this has a certain extent.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

Criminal proceedings, especially for certain crimes such as sexual offenses, are often associated with intense emotional stress. The cases can contain traumatizing details that are stressful for both the judge and other parties involved (prosecutor, defense attorney, victim). The judge must remain objective and at the same time deal with the seriousness of the offenses. Constantly dealing with serious and sometimes frightening offenses can lead to emotional strain and affect the judge's well-being. Especially in cases involving victims or offenders who are in a difficult mental state, this can cause additional stress.

Family law cases often involve personal, intimate and emotional aspects of people's lives. Custody disputes, parental violence or child welfare issues are highly sensitive and can place a heavy burden on both the parties involved and the judge. The emotional dynamics and complexity of family relationships make it difficult to remain objective at all times. The burden of responsibility to make decisions that have a lasting impact on the lives of children or families, as well as the constant confrontation with emotionally charged conflicts, can lead to high levels of stress. The pressure to make decisions that are crucial to those involved can be a source of stress.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

Yes, there are.

The type of jurisdiction in which a judge works has a significant impact on their experience and the associated stress levels. Different fields of work have different impacts on one's well-being.

A judge's seniority and experience can influence their ability to cope with stress and their sense of control over their work. An experienced judge is usually more competent and confident, which makes them better able to deal with stressful situations. On the other hand, less experienced judges who are still in the learning phase may be under more pressure to make quick and informed decisions in difficult or complex cases.

A decisive factor for a judge's well-being is their workload. A high caseload or an unmanageable volume of cases can lead to chronic overwork, which increases the risk of stress and burnout.

Support from colleagues, superiors and the institution itself plays an important role in a judge's well-being. A supportive working environment in which judges can fall back on a network of colleagues, mentors or superiors makes it easier to cope with stress.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

- Self-care and physical health (like regular exercise)
- Time management and prioritization
- Reflection and emotional distancing
- Regular breaks
- Promotion of resilience
- Further training

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

These factors are not explicitly monitored or measured. The government and parliament are informed about the activities of the courts and their workload as part of the annual business report. However, as already mentioned, as part of the annual allocation of cases, the Court Presidium reviews the workload of the respective court divisions on the basis of previous case numbers and makes adjustments where necessary.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

Judges in Liechtenstein have the opportunity to receive further training in various areas; not only in subject-specific topics but also, for example, in stress management, etc. Such further training is welcomed by the judicial authorities and presiding judges and will also be mandatory to a certain extent from 2026.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

The small size of Liechtenstein and the fact that there are only a few judges makes it easier for the courts to react to problems in connection with stress and well-being and to implement appropriate measures. due to this small size and the fact that it is also possible to react individually to problems in connection with well-being and stress, comprehensive or far-reaching measures in this context are, in my opinion, not absolutely necessary in Liechtenstein at present. The question can therefore not be answered in this form.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

Yes.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

No.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

In my view, the well-being of the judges in Liechtenstein is currently sufficiently supported.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

No.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

No.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

No.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

Not applicable.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

No.

I. Reconnaître l'importance du bien-être des juges et son impact sur l'efficacité des pouvoirs judiciaires

1. Le bien-être des juges est-il reconnu comme une question importante et un facteur contribuant à l'efficacité du pouvoir judiciaire dans votre pays ? Si oui, comment cela se fait-il et à quel niveau ?
NON, le bien-être des magistrats n'est pas considéré comme un facteur dans le cadre de l'efficacité de la justice. Aucune mesure n'a été adoptée à cette fin au Luxembourg

Eventuellement soulever le service psychologique

2. Pensez-vous que des mesures suffisantes sont prises pour soutenir et promouvoir le bien-être des juges dans votre pays, compte tenu de ses implications pour le bon fonctionnement du pouvoir judiciaire ?

NON

II. Stress et bien-être des juges

3. Selon vous, quels sont les aspects positifs du travail judiciaire qui peuvent apporter satisfaction et bien-être aux juges ?

Indépendance dans la prise de décisions, reconnaissance du travail effectué

4. Selon vous, quelles sont les caractéristiques négatives du travail judiciaire qui peuvent être à l'origine du stress et de l'insatisfaction des juges ?

Incompréhension du grand public du travail et des conditions de travail

5. Dans quelle mesure, selon vous, la stigmatisation du stress et des difficultés professionnelles des juges entrave-t-elle les efforts visant à favoriser le bien-être des juges ?

?

6. Certains types d'affaires (par exemple, les domaines de la pratique juridique où les affaires sont sensibles et très complexes) peuvent-ils présenter un risque plus élevé de stress chez les juges ? Dans l'affirmative, veuillez fournir des détails sur les types d'affaires susceptibles d'être considérés comme présentant un risque plus élevé et expliquer pourquoi.

Justice des mineurs

Droit de la famille

Investigations pénales

7. Existe-t-il d'autres facteurs contextuels susceptibles d'avoir un impact différent sur le bien-être des juges (par exemple, la juridiction, l'ancienneté ou l'expérience) ? Si oui, pourquoi, à votre avis, ces facteurs pourraient-ils avoir des effets différents dans la pratique ?

?

III. Mesures existantes pour soutenir et promouvoir le bien-être des juges

8. Selon vous, quelles stratégies personnelles pourraient aider les juges à gérer leur propre stress et leur bien-être au travail ?

9. Les institutions judiciaires de votre pays mesurent-elles et contrôlent-elles actuellement les niveaux de stress et de bien-être des juges ? Dans l'affirmative, veuillez préciser ce que cela implique et à quelle fréquence les niveaux sont contrôlés.

Non

10. Les juges reçoivent-ils une formation sur la manière de préserver leur bien-être ? Dans l'affirmative, veuillez fournir des détails sur cette formation et indiquer à quel stade elle est dispensée.

Non.

Possibilité d'avoir recours à un psychologue qui organise de façon irrégulière des séances de

11. De quelle manière les tribunaux de votre pays répondent-ils aux efforts visant à réduire le stress des juges et à favoriser leur bien-être ?

Aucunement

12. Selon vous, les mesures actuelles pour soutenir et promouvoir le bien-être des juges dans votre pays sont-elles suffisantes ?

NON – aucun intérêt n'est manifesté é ce jour par les autorités

13. Votre pays a-t-il pris des mesures, ou envisage-t-il de prendre des mesures, pour mettre en œuvre la Déclaration de Nauru sur le bien-être des juges ? Dans l'affirmative, veuillez fournir des détails sur les mesures prises ou envisagées.

?

IV. Perspectives d'avenir : solutions et défis potentiels

14. Comment les institutions judiciaires et les tribunaux pourraient-ils mieux soutenir le bien-être des juges dans votre pays afin d'assurer le bon fonctionnement du système judiciaire ?

15. Des stratégies ont-elles été élaborées pour le bien-être des juges, par exemple dans le cadre de la gestion efficace des affaires sensibles et très complexes ?

Non

16. Existe-t-il des problèmes ou des défis dans votre pays concernant le développement et la mise en œuvre de telles stratégies au niveau institutionnel et juridictionnel ? Dans l'affirmative, quel type de solutions pouvez-vous proposer pour surmonter ces défis institutionnels et organisationnels ?

Non

17. Existe-t-il des problèmes ou des défis dans votre pays concernant l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre de telles stratégies au niveau individuel ?

Non

18. Dans l'affirmative, quel type de solutions pouvez-vous proposer pour surmonter ces défis au niveau individuel ?

Un questionnaire à l'attention de l'ensemble des magistrats concernant notamment le bien-être des juges est actuellement en voie d'élaboration sous l'égide du Conseil national de la justice.

Les réponses données à ce questionnaire permettront sans doute de dégager des solutions.

19. Souhaitez-vous faire d'autres commentaires sur le bien-être des juges dans votre pays qui n'ont pas été abordés ci-dessus ?

Malta / Malte

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

The Code of Ethics for the Judiciary regulates their conduct and provides them with guidelines that expressly confirm the values they have always adhered to. These values are also being brought to the notice of the public so as to strengthen trust in the administration of Justice.

Additionally, the Judicial Studies Committee was established to oversee the ongoing education and training of members of the judiciary and to enhance the professional development and well-being of judges through continuous learning opportunities.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

Insufficient resources, including lack of sufficiently competent staff, coupled with a heavy case load and more complex issues in litigation contribute to stress and anxiety. Despite reforms, public perception of judicial independence is around average, suggesting room for improvement in supporting judges' autonomy and reducing external pressures.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

- The need to interpret and apply complex legal principles offers continuous intellectual engagement.
- Judges exercise independence in decision-making, fostering a sense of personal and professional autonomy.
- The Judicial Studies Committee oversees ongoing education and training, enhancing professional growth.
- Holding a judicial position commands societal respect, contributing to personal esteem.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

- Managing extensive caseloads and dealing with significant judicial delays can lead to stress.

- Exposure to sensitive cases, such as those involving migrants or politically sensitive issues, can be emotionally taxing.
 - Insufficient resources and staffing can hinder the efficient functioning of the judiciary, leading to frustration and dissatisfaction. Civil society groups have stressed the need for a properly funded judiciary to ensure timely justice.
 - Judges may face public and media scrutiny, especially following high-profile cases, which can be stressful.
5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

Discussing stress and mental health challenges among judges in Malta has historically been limited, potentially hindering the development of supportive measures. However, recent initiatives, such as the establishment of the Judicial Studies Committee, indicate a growing recognition of the importance of judicial well-being. Addressing stigma is crucial for fostering an environment where judges can seek support without fear of negative repercussions.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

Migration and Asylum Cases: Given Malta's strategic location in the Mediterranean, judges frequently handle cases involving migrants and asylum seekers, which can be complex and emotionally challenging.

Corruption and High-Profile Cases: Cases involving allegations of corruption, especially those implicating public figures, can be stressful due to their complexity and public interest and the fact that the outcome can be exploited for political purposes, leading to perceptions of bias.

Family and Juvenile Cases: Decisions affecting families and children, particularly in sensitive situations, can be emotionally taxing for judges

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

Less experienced judges may face higher stress due to adapting to the role's demands, while seasoned judges might experience stress differently based on their caseload and responsibilities.

Access to adequate resources, including administrative support and training, can significantly impact a judge's well-being. Calls for a properly funded judiciary highlight the importance of this factor.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

- Regular Physical Activity: Engaging in exercise can alleviate stress and improve mental health.
 - Mindfulness and Meditation: Practices such as mindfulness can help in managing stress and promoting emotional well-being.
 - Time Management: Organizing work efficiently can reduce feelings of being overwhelmed.
 - Social Connections: Maintaining supportive relationships with family, friends, and colleagues provides emotional support.
 - Professional Support: Seeking assistance from mental health professionals when needed ensures proper stress management
9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.
- There is no institutional set-up for these purposes.
10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.
- In practice judges discuss these matters with trusted colleagues on an individual or one-to-one basis.
11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?
- Recognising the need to reduce the workload of judges, the Court Services Agency has initiated recruitment efforts to enhance administrative support within the judiciary. This initiative aims to ensure that judges receive adequate assistance in managing their caseloads, thereby reducing stress and improving efficiency.
12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?
- Adopting comprehensive strategies, possibly inspired by international frameworks like the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-being, could enhance support for judicial officers. At the moment the institutional set-up is lacking.
13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.
- Members of the judiciary are not aware of any such steps.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

- Specialisation of Judicial Roles: Establishing specialised courts or divisions for complex and sensitive cases can reduce the cognitive load on judges, allowing for more focused expertise and potentially quicker resolutions.
- Comprehensive Training Programs: Implementing continuous professional development that includes training on managing complex cases, emotional resilience, and stress management can equip judges with necessary coping mechanisms.
- Enhanced Recruitment Efforts: Increasing the number of judges can distribute workloads more evenly, reducing individual stress and preventing burnout.
- Robust Support Systems: Providing access to psychological support services and peer support networks can help judges navigate the emotional challenges inherent in their roles.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

Malta has undertaken reforms to enhance judicial efficiency, such as the development of a Digital Justice Strategy to streamline processes. Implementing specialised training and support mechanisms, as mentioned above, could be beneficial in this context.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

Potential challenges may include:

- Limited financial and human resources can hinder the development and execution of comprehensive well-being programs.
- Traditional perceptions may undervalue the importance of mental health support, leading to reluctance in adopting new initiatives.
- Existing institutional frameworks may lack the flexibility needed to implement significant changes swiftly.

Proposed Solutions:

- Promoting the benefits of judicial well-being programs through evidence-based research can garner institutional support.
- Introducing changes gradually allows for adaptation and minimizes resistance.

- Partnering with international bodies and leveraging external expertise can provide additional resources and insights.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

Heavy workloads may leave little time for participation in well-being programs.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

Offering training and support sessions at various times can accommodate diverse schedules.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

While Malta has initiated several reforms aimed at enhancing judicial efficiency and transparency, such as the Digital Justice Strategy, ongoing efforts are needed to address the unique challenges faced by judges. Continued focus on specialised training, adequate support systems, and resource allocation will be essential to foster a judiciary that is both effective and resilient.

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

Unfortunately, in my country the judicial well-being is not recognised as an important issue. There are no discussions at all on mental health or stress when it comes to judges and members of the judiciary in Republic of Moldova.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

There are no actions taking to support and promote the well-being of judges. Judges are just supposed to pass a medical examination once in 5 years. And there is a provision in the law that you can be fired on these grounds.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

The most important and positive features of judicial work from which judges might experience satisfaction is the public recognition of delivering a fair justice from judicial system.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

The most common negative features of judicial work appear to be excessive workloads. Apparently, all judges from Moldova are under constant stress from excessive workloads, which in turn slows them down, causes them to take longer to process the cases, and creates further backlogs.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

Stressed judges may experience impaired judgment, leading to negative consequences for court outcomes. If the profession does not address mental health, it can impact the quality of justice delivered. Stigma can prevent judges from sharing experiences and solutions with peers, leading to isolation. This lack of community support can exacerbate stress and mental health issues.

So, it's crucial to promote open conversations about mental health, implement training on recognizing and addressing stress, and normalize seeking help within the judicial community. Creating supportive environments can ultimately enhance judicial well-being and the effectiveness of the justice system.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

High-profile or violent criminal cases can be particularly stressful for judges. The need to navigate the emotional weight of severe crimes, potential public scrutiny, and the responsibility for life-altering decisions can contribute to significant stress. Especially in Moldova the cases that present higher risk of judicial stress are election cases, because you have a very short time frame to take decisions and you are dealing with cases and complaints from all political parties.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

The overall culture within a court can significantly impact judges' well-being. A positive, collaborative environment can enhance resilience, while a toxic environment can exacerbate stress.

Judges with more experience may have developed better coping mechanisms and resilience over time, potentially buffering them against stress. Less experienced judges might struggle more with the emotional toll of difficult cases and lack the support systems they need.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

Effective time management techniques, such as prioritizing tasks, setting realistic deadlines, and taking breaks, can help judges feel more in control and reduce feelings of being overwhelmed. Prioritizing sleep, nutrition, and hydration contributes to better stress management and overall resilience.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

Unfortunately, there is no judicial institution in my country that is monitoring levels of judicial stress and well-being.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

Individual judges are not receiving any trainings on how they can maintain their well-being.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

Courts in my country do not have any programs to support judicial well-being.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

There are no measures to support and promote judicial well-being in my country.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

There are no steps taking to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being in Republic of Moldova.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

Judicial institutions might offer retreats focused on mindfulness practices, relaxation, and personal reflection, helping judges to recharge away from the pressures of their work. Courts may conduct research on judicial stress and well-being to better understand its impact and develop targeted interventions. Also, Courts should promote work-life balance through policies that allow judges and staff to take vacations, personal leave, or sabbaticals to recharge physically and mentally. The judicial institutions might collaborate with mental health professionals, legal organizations, and academic institutions to develop comprehensive strategies for judicial well-being.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

There are no strategies elaborated in context of how to deal effectively with complex cases.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

There is a traditional mindset that does not prioritize judicial well-being, viewing it as less important than the judicial process itself.

There is a social stigma associated with seeking help for mental health problems, leading to reluctance among judges to use available resources.

There is also the problem with insufficient training programs addressing stress management, emotional resilience, and wellness in the judiciary.

Among solutions that can redress the situations are as follows:

Implement awareness campaigns to normalize mental health conversations within the judiciary, highlighting the importance of well-being and reducing stigma. Peer testimonials and workshops can encourage openness.

Evaluate and adjust caseload distribution to ensure a manageable workload for judges. Implementing technology and case management systems may improve efficiency, allowing judges more time for well-being activities.

Establish a standardized framework for judicial wellness programs that can be universally adopted across all courts, ensuring consistency in access and resources.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

Financial constraints may hinder the establishment of comprehensive wellness programs, peer support networks, and mental health services for judges in Republic of Moldova.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

Advocate for increased budget allocations from the government, potentially collaborating with international organizations or NGOs to secure funding for judicial wellness initiatives. Utilizing grant opportunities for mental health projects could also be beneficial.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

In addition to the causes described above that negatively influence the well-being of judges, there is also the vetting process currently underway in the Republic of Moldova. This creates stress for judges, which directly influences the quality of the act of justice and obviously the well-being of judges. Poor salaries is another factor that create feelings of anxiety and instability for judges. All of the above ultimately influence their independence and well-being.

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

The well-being of judges is not considered an important issue by public authorities in Poland. It is not assigned a normative value, and no systematic actions are taken to improve it. The lack of interest of the public authorities in the well-being of judges and the recent actions of the executive and legislative powers and the court administration, including factual actions directed at judges, result in the well-being of judges being very low - and the performance of judicial duties, although done at the expense of the physical and mental health of judges, does not guarantee the reliable and effective administration of justice, to the detriment of citizens. Since December 2023, the Minister of Justice has not announced new competitions for the office of judge, which has led to a complete collapse in the efficiency of proceedings and the increase of workload of judges beyond all permissible standards. In large urban centres, judges in first-instance courts are often overloaded with work, they conduct hundreds of cases at the same time, and it is also difficult to find good clerical resources, which are also significantly affected by the fluctuation process (due to excess of duties combined with an insufficient level of remuneration), which is an important element affecting the work of judges, in particular the quality, efficiency and timeliness of their activities. Judicial reforms in this area are either not carried out or are of a purely apparent nature.

Judges appointed to the office of judge since 2018 are subjected to negative and permanent pressure from judicial functionaries appointed by the current Minister of Justice, and intimidated by fellow judges – members of these judges' associations which openly support the current government; they are presented as *illegal judges* who will be expelled from the profession and may be burdened with the need to return salaries, as well as be subject to disciplinary and criminal liability. The above circumstances testify to the very low level of well-being of numerous judges who, being burdened with excessive work, are not sure of their future and are treated by their fellow colleagues appointed to office before 2018 as "contaminated", substantively unfit and illegal persons in the office. The result of the above circumstances are more and more frequent health, family and financial problems.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

Not enough, quite the opposite. Since December 2023, no measures have been taken to improve the well-being of judges. The current government is not taking any steps to carry out a thorough reform aimed at streamlining and improving the speed of court dispute resolution. The activities of the Minister of Justice are focused only on the preparation of bills on the expulsion from the profession and the demotion of more than 3,250 judges, as evidenced by the draft law of 24 April 2025.

The activities of the Minister of Justice also include the appointment of special disciplinary officers who, on the recommendation of the Minister of Justice, have the sole task of conducting disciplinary proceedings against judges appointed by the Minister of Justice, which leads to intimidation and undermining the sense of independence among judges. This is a new practice and an action abused by the current Minister of Justice. In the years 2017-2023, such an ombudsman was appointed only once, while since January 2024, the Minister of Justice has already appointed several dozen such ombudsmen.

The Minister of Justice has taken actions against judges – members of the National Council of the Judiciary (KRS), the Disciplinary Representative for Judges of Common Courts and his Deputies [i.e. judges acting as prosecutors in disciplinary proceedings], and those judges who participated in the procedure for electing judges to the National Council of the Judiciary. They lead to a significant undermining of the well-being of judges and are aimed at preventing the functioning of the Council (KRS), i.e. increasing the workload of judicial members of the National Council of the Judiciary in their courts and initiating disciplinary proceedings against these judges, bringing charges for membership in the National Council of the Judiciary as such and for adhering to the applicable law.

Such actions are also taken against other judges (including disciplinary representatives) for acting in accordance with the provisions of the law in force in Poland.

The National Council of the Judiciary, the body responsible for safeguarding the independence of courts and judges, receives information from various judges' associations and individual judges who complain that they are being intimidated and fear removal from the profession, face disciplinary proceedings, harassment by court presidents and other judges associated with the current government.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

Independence and a sense of service and a well-fulfilled duty can be the factors that give satisfaction from the work of a judge. For many years, a positive tenet of judicial work was also the irremovability of judges from the profession. In view of the current actions of the Minister of Justice, who appoints disciplinary officers and plans to appoint more judges in relation to over 600 judges for acting in accordance with the law (signing lists of support for candidates for judicial members of the National Council of the Judiciary), and provides in the draft law of 24 April 2025 for professional degradation (using a mechanism of a humiliating nature) or dismissal from the profession for potentially several thousand judges - the constitutional guarantee of irremovability already seems to have ceased to be a guaranteeing factor of the well-being of judges.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

Lack of a properly shaped workplace, difficult housing conditions, (judges often work in 2- or 3-person rooms), including insufficient parking spaces. Poor housing conditions sometimes even make it impossible to schedule hearings at a reasonable time for the citizen, because there are no courtrooms available in courts at the moment.

A very large number of cases per judge - the number of cases remaining in the judges' caseload is increasingly very high, reaching up to 700, and in extreme cases 900 cases per person. In some courts in Poland, the first dates of hearings in civil cases are currently being set for 2031, which means that a citizen in matters that are a matter of life for him (e.g. in divorce or property cases) is practically deprived of the constitutional right to a court. Such a large level of caseload and their growing incoming number has a negative impact on the well-being of judges, because it means that there is no real possibility of hearing cases within a reasonable time.

An important factor is also the lack of a sufficient number of qualified administrative staff to support the work of judges, in particular – the assistants.

There are also other practical constraints that have a negative impact on well-being – for example, the lack of sufficient foster families in family courts. On the other hand, in the case of criminal cases – pressure on the judges not to apply deprivation of freedom measures in a situation when, for example, the Deputy Minister of Justice announces the release of about 25,000 convicts from prisons in Poland and expects judges to apply non-custodial punishments in the first place.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

There are situations in which the public opinion or political circles try to influence the course of the court process by making negative comments or expressing their expectations, which can have a negative impact on the judge's work and increase the level of stress. This is inscribed in the work of a judge and in the public opinion a judge should be able to cope with such situations. However, this is not always the case, but the public opinion, as well as the public authorities, do not seem to take this into account.

As a result, there are no activities supporting the improvement of the well-being of judges and no research or analysis is carried out on the impact of occupational stress on the health and well-being of judges. In fact, it is a kind of taboo subject that is not usually covered by training, nor is it discussed with court presidents and other judges.

In the opinion of many judges, the statutory institution of health leave is very rarely used, even in the case of seriously ill judges. For higher-level bodies (such as the Minister of Justice or court presidents), the well-being of judges is not a matter of primary concern; Court presidents are first and foremost interested in dealing with as much caseload as possible – in order to keep it in certain limits, because this is what they are held accountable for. Less is said about the challenges, including the stress faced by the judge, because it is assumed that this is the duty of the judge, who should be tough in order to maintain a well-balanced attitude to the case under consideration.

Professionally active judges are not subject to periodic mental health examinations, and their level of professional stress is not monitored, despite the fact that the obligation to undergo periodic examinations in Poland with respect to other health factors is being fulfilled.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

As indicated in the previous question, in general, cases of public and media interest, as well as cases with a political element, may pose a greater risk of stress for judges.

In addition, there are cases related to serious human misfortune, disability, tragedies. Judges must be prepared to deal with drastic, harrowing details, but it is not always easy. Evidence in such cases must be analysed in detail in order for them to be reliably resolved (especially in criminal cases, where the judge shall necessarily have more frequent contact with human misfortune of a large scale, which may affect his psyche when it is necessary to familiarize oneself with drastic materials). There are no instruments in the structure of the judiciary that could be used by judges to deal with such difficult, emotionally burdening situations.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

Certainly, experience in the work of a judge and longer experience allow one to avoid stressful situations and reduce the risk of stress. Without doubt, experience in the work of a judge and longer work experience may increase the likelihood of developing an individual mechanism for coping with stressful situations. The housing conditions and the type of administrative services provided by the president of the court may also contribute. Better working conditions, easier categories of cases or a smaller, non-excessive caseload shall inevitably contribute to the better well-being of the judge.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

The work of a judge in coping with stress can be supported by practical professional training and *work/life balance*. In Poland, judges, due to the overload of work, are frequently forced to work from home, often significantly exceeding the working hours. For this reason, they are overworked, cannot rest properly, which then translates into stress levels and health consequences.

It would also be beneficial to have greater access to health leave, as well as the introduction of full salary (100%) for the time of absence from work for health reasons. Currently, due to the fact that the salary on sick leave is significantly lower, judges resign from leave even in the case of serious illnesses, also in order to avoid a huge increase in their caseload, amassing in the meantime.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

There is no information available that such actions have been carried out by judicial institutions, or more broadly: state institutions, in relation to judges. In particular, the institutions established to monitor working conditions, the Central Institute for Labour Protection and the Institute of Labour and Social Affairs, do not conduct any research with regard to judges.

The only known activities are carried out by scientific and non-governmental institutions and are not systematic; we can mention here the *Temida 2015* programme [a series of studies conducted by scientists from Warsaw from the *Healthy Work Association* in cooperation with the *Solidarity* Trade Union of Judiciary Employees]. However, these are surveys conducted among both judges and administrative employees, and due to their anonymity, it is not possible to separate and distinguish data directly concerning judges in the results. The next edition of this study (*Temida 2021*) is currently underway, but its results have not yet been published.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

Certain elements of preparing a judge for challenges affecting their well-being can be found in the initial judicial training program, which includes such training modules as:

- discussion of psychological aspects of the administration of justice (ability to cope with stress, assertiveness, contacts with parties, psychology of interpersonal communication, assessment of the credibility of witness and party testimony, communication with people with mental disorders).

As part of continuing training, judges can currently benefit from the following trainings:
- *Counteracting mobbing and discrimination in the workplace*.

Incidentally (every few years) training on professional burnout is also available (as part of continuing training).

However, the indicated elements are fragmentary and in no way truly affect the level of knowledge of judges on how to take care of their well-being and reduce the level of professional stress.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

No such efforts are currently being made.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

They are not sufficient and do not meet the minimum standards.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

Since its adoption in July 2024, the Nauru Declaration has not even been officially translated into Polish, and to my knowledge, no official declarations have been made regarding the implementation of its provisions.

Some limited actions in this area have already been carried out previously, although they were not of fundamental practical importance for the level of judicial well-being:

– in 2014 and 2018, the provisions on medical and psychological examinations of candidates for the office of judge were clarified (with emphasis on the candidate's nervous and mental health, as well as the additional requirements demanded from medical examiners in order to perform their task)

– by order of the Minister of Justice of 12 June 2017, a Team for Counteracting Mobbing and Violations of the Rights of Persons Performing Professional Duties in Common Courts was appointed;

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

Through a thorough reform of the judiciary, leading to a lower and comparable workload for judges and to a significant increase in the number of qualified civil servants supporting the work of judges.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

To the best of knowledge, no such strategies and information have been developed in this area and are not being implemented.

Certain elements of preparing a judge for challenges, e.g. in the field of effective handling of delicate and very complex cases, can only be found in the program of the initial judicial training, where there are such training modules as:

- discussion on the most common mistakes and shortcomings,
- problems appearing most frequently in complaints.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

Such strategies and information have not been developed and are therefore not implemented.

(see answer to question 15)

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

Due to the lack of such strategies, it is currently not possible to implement such strategies at the individual level.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

The question does not currently apply to Poland.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

(none)

Romania / Roumanie

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of the judiciary

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

A matter of, if any, individual concern, judicial well-being started only recently to be recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in Romania.

Generally speaking, the assessment of the well-being of judges is a continuous process aimed at adopting strategies that aim to create, develop and promote an optimal work environment, by capitalizing on the dimensions associated with efficiency and effectiveness: the clarity of the definition of professional objectives, individual responsibilities and existing work procedures; interpersonal relationships and communication, from the perspective of the principles that underlie them; the quality of professional collaboration; addressing difficult professional and/or interpersonal problems or situations; existing resources that can be capitalized on, such as performance standards, knowledge, skills and values of the magistrate, professional development, financial and human resources.

A good example is the CPCJ project – Increasing institutional performance and quality by improving the system of psychological evaluation and assistance at the level of the judicial system, implemented by the Superior Council of Magistracy in partnership with the National Institute of Magistracy, the Judicial Inspection and the Prosecutor's Office attached to the High Court of Cassation and Justice between August 2020 and December 2023, that had the general objective of improving the recruitment process of both judges and prosecutors and their psychological assistance and evaluation throughout their professional career, as well as in terms of access to managerial positions, with the ultimate aim of increasing the quality of justice and improving the professional performance of the judicial system as a whole.

The concern for the personal needs of magistrates, the quality of their work environment, as well as the need to improve personal skills has become, through this project, a constant activity of the Superior Council of Magistracy, as guarantor of the independence of the justice system. Romanian magistrates are thus provided with tools that will be permanently improved, adapted and updated in relation to the evolution of computer technology and the science of psychology, with the help of professionals and all members of the judiciary.

These tools can be accessed through the MindApp application, a modern, innovative and secure digital platform of the highest standards, dedicated to psychological assistance and assessments within the judiciary.

The Mindapp platform was developed within the mentioned project and contains a complex range of services for testing, evaluation and psychological assistance of magistrates or future magistrates, as the case may be.

Mindapp aims to create the premises for the development of a community whose members (magistrates and psychologists) can contribute through specialized knowledge to the improvement of individual professional performance, to the integration into the professional team or to motivational and aptitude training, in order to optimize professional performance, increase organizational efficiency, improve the wellbeing of staff and reduce psycho-behavioral events related to stress or other special professional demands.

Within the framework of the CPCI project, the evaluation tool '*Wellbeing Inventory in a Professional Context CSM SBP*' was developed, available to psychologists working in the system and beneficial to magistrates as it provides psychological assistance in the framework of periodic psychological evaluation procedures or on request in the framework of individual counselling activities.

The '*Wellbeing Inventory in the Professional Context of the SCM SBP*' was developed with the aim to assess well-being and related factors specific to the professional context of magistrates. The Well-Being Dimension (SB) is formed by embedding in a composite score a wide range of components, targeting both positive and negative manifestations of well-being in a professional context.

I would point out that the well-being of magistrates has been a constant concern for the Superior Council of Magistracy over time, with psychologists working at this institution conducting research on the "*Impact of the workload on the professional performance of judges*", depending on certain statistical indicators, namely the number of cases dealt with, the complexity of the files, the section and the workload of the court.

Recently, legislative amendments have been adopted to the primary and secondary legislation introducing the following procedures and tools to monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being, as well as to provide specialised support through psychologists employed at the level of the courts of appeal and the prosecutor's offices attached thereto, the High Court of Cassation and Justice, the prosecutor's office attached thereto, the specialised DNA and DIICOT structures, and at the level of the SCM, the NMI and the JI.

These procedures and tools consist of:

- Periodic psychological assessment of magistrates: it takes place every 5 years, it is carried out by the evaluation committee set up at the level of the court/prosecution office/institution, it is completed by indicating the recommended/not recommended grade, with the obligation, in the case of the non-recommended grade, to follow a 6-month psychological counselling programme together with a psychologist from the judiciary or

from outside, with the possibility of changing it and/or modifying or adapting the counselling programme depending on necessity and evolution;

- Permanent psychological assistance, which may take several forms: on request, individually (with the possibility of using the Mindapp system for viewing specializations and trainings and establishing a counseling program including online); on request, collectively; participation in personal development sessions organized, at least quarterly, by psychologists from the judiciary; carry out a climate analysis, every 3 years and whenever necessary.

- In addition, the following shall be added: the obligation of magistrates to participate, annually, in an individual meeting with the psychologist and to participate at least once a year in the sessions for the development of specific psychological skills, organized by the psychologist.

Psychological support relies on tailored psychological tools to provide personalised and effective support. The concept of psychological assistance was the center of the project and is the most important part of the Mindapp IT application, the periodical psychological assessment, which has a preventive and prophylactic purpose, being seen as a component of the larger and more complex system of permanent psychological assistance.

It has to be mentioned that each court of appeal and the High Court of Cassation and Justice have their own psycho. However, most frequently, judges would not voluntarily go to see him, since they would have difficulties in accepting the idea they need one or they do not want to be perceived as having such a need. Sending a judge to see the psycho of the court has also a negative connotation in the mind of many judges.

At the level of the High Court of Cassation and Justice, there were discussions at the level of the Management College on how to involve more the psycho in supporting the wellbeing of the staff.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

In my opinion, more could be done in order to support and promote the well-being of judges in Romania, given exactly its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary.

In Romania, people with leadership positions in judicial institutions and courts in the country have an important role in supporting and promoting the well-being of magistrates. However, this role is only an informal one and it is not necessarily required or even supported at systemic level, so it heavily depends on the managerial skills of each leader. Quite frequently, at managerial level, through preventive actions, problematic aspects are identified from the perspective of the degree of work demands, as well as their consequences on the state of comfort and psychological health.

Magistrates are a professional category that is constantly exposed to intense sources of stress. The workload, difficult decisions, media and social pressure or ethical

requirements, auspices which they work under are just a few examples of the professional demands they face.

Generally speaking, judges with high levels of well-being feel positive, energetic and motivated at work. These professionals are full of vitality, feel active and make a significant contribution to their working environment. In addition, they are healthy and work at their optimal capacity. On the other hand, low well-being means low levels of energy and excitement at work. These people feel that their work does not bring value or get recognition, which exhausts them both physically and mentally. This negative state affects not only the performance at work, but also the general health of these professionals.

It's exactly what justifies the need for an instrument dedicated to measuring well-being in a professional context such the one I described above, that outlines both positive (such as work involvement) and negative (such as burnout) behaviors, as well as risk factors (job applications) or protective (professional resources) for them.

However, this measuring tool has to be accompanied by concrete proposal for increasing the level of wellbeing, when its level becomes critical.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

In my opinion, supported by the results of the above mentioned study, the main positive features of judicial activity, from which judges could experience satisfaction and well-being, are:

- Professional engagement, the positive mental and emotional state judges experience when they are deeply connected and involved in their work activities. The people involved feel proud and fulfilled of their contribution and are often deeply focused on what they are doing.
- Professional satisfaction, meaning the satisfaction judges feel with different aspects of their work, such as the working environment, relations with colleagues, prospects for professional development, such as promotion and other opportunities in career as a whole. Judges feel fulfilled and motivated at work, as they observe the constant recognition and rewarding of their efforts.
- The way professional activity is organized, the style of leadership, decision-making and participation, professional communication and collaboration, and the general working climate can also contribute to the satisfaction and well-being of judges.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

In my opinion, the main negative features of judicial activity from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction concern:

- *overloading* (crowding with tasks, overloading due to a high workload, high volume of caseload leading to fear of burnout – e.g. court running 6,000 cases per year, where only two judge positions are filled),
- *deadlines* (time pressure),
- legislative instability,
- *stand-by duty/out-of-hours work* and
- *staff fluctuation*.

Professional demands include both quantitative aspects, such as the actual workload, and qualitative aspects, such as the overload of mental functions, the lack of control or the low level of control regarding the organization of working time, communication and collaboration difficulties, the level of responsibility in professional activity, and the experience of a conflict between professional and family roles.

The attention or even the pressure from the mass media and the public opinion are a sometimes a factor of stress.

Other major sources of stress frequently outlined by judges are related to the activity of solving cases, the pressure to give a solution in a case / framing within deadlines, the weight of decision-making (the fact that decisions are taken that have a major influence on people's lives), the lack of experience in complex cases (due to the young age of entering the profession) / the high degree of difficulty of some cases, the volume of legislative changes / too frequent changes in the legislation that create frustrations in the judiciary, the purpose of the work performed, as well as the fear of wrongly solving a case, respectively the desire to correctly formulate arguments, problems relating to work colleagues, working conditions (physical – office equipment, size, ergonomics of rooms), etc.

In concrete situations, due to the emotional burden associated to some cases, judges could have a feeling of helplessness, since the principle of impartiality requires the exclusion of emotions from the decision-making process.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

Failure to manage stress at work, lack of personal or institutional solutions to compensate for possible stress factors, respectively the absence of measures to reduce stress at work, either on a personal level or on an organizational level, determine the direct proportional damage in the judicial activity.

The efficiency of the methods such as the ones developed under the CPCJ project¹ is limited exactly due to the specificity of the organisational culture that stigmatises judicial stress and implicitly hinders efforts to support judicial well-being, that is perceived by some members

¹ *'Increasing institutional performance and quality by improving the system of psychological evaluation and assistance at the level of the judicial system'*

of the professional body as vulnerabilities of the judge that may affect the prestige of the judicial office.

This fear of stigmatization is still very pressing within the professional body, correlated with a lack of confidence in the confidentiality of the psychological act carried out in the organizational environment, as well as in the methods associated with it.

As mentioned before, even if each court of appeal and the High Court of Cassation and Justice have their own psycho, most frequently, judges would not voluntarily go to see him, since they would have difficulties in accepting the idea they need one or they do not want to be perceived as having such a need. Sending a judge to see the psycho of the court has also a negative connotation in the mind of many judges.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

Some cases might present a higher risk of judicial stress since they are usually associated to a high degree of complexity. Such cases could be, for example: criminal cases involving high profile inculpates, big corruption, big public procurement cases, electoral cases etc..

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

According to data provided by a study managed by SCM, CAWI (Computer-assisted web interviewing), the recorded data highlights the fact that the performance of judges tends to fluctuate greatly depending on the number and complexity of the cases handled.

With regard to the categories most exposed to the risk of welfare impairment, according to the same study, they are represented in particular by judges working at the level of lower courts and tribunals, as their effort to draft decisions is much higher than that recorded for judges of appeal courts. The increase in the volume of cases has negative effects on professional performance in the sense that it leads to a significant increase in the time allocated for the drafting of rulings, the direct consequence being the occurrence of delays in activity with the depletion of energy resources and the onset of fatigue.

Also a consequence of overexposure to information is an increasing demand for the mechanisms responsible for managing emotions, namely self-control and emotional stability. Therefore, judges facing a large volume of cases have a much higher risk of developing symptoms specific to emotional stress (emotional and physical exhaustion; reduction of professional achievements, depersonalization, etc.), compared to judges who manage a medium and small volume of caseload.

In my personal opinion, the level of the stress at the highest level (Supreme court and sometimes courts of appeal deciding as last instance) is even higher due to the complexity of cases and the pressure of deciding in the last instance.

In my opinion, professional experience can be at a psychological level a factor that also mitigates the level in which the specific demands of the activity are felt by judges, from this point of view professional experience acting as a coping mechanism.

Coming back to the results of the above mentioned study, the well-being of judges is significantly influenced by a number of contextual factors, associated with the lack of resources of the position.

Professional resources can contribute to the well-being of judges, supporting needs, such as autonomy, competence and connection and enabling judges to achieve their professional goals and thus perform better. For example, support staff, assistants to the judge, who provide instrumental support in completing tasks can increase a judge's ability to achieve his or her objectives, leading to greater job satisfaction and better performance. The lack of resources of the function is directly linked to professional burnout. Judges who benefit from a larger stock of resources from the institutions of the judiciary can cope with the demands of the profession more easily and protect themselves from exhaustion.

With regard to contextual factors that could influence the well-being of judges from the point of view of resource management at the level of the institutions of the judiciary, the study also mentioned: overloading, deadlines, legislative instability, on duty/out-of-work, staff turnover.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

It is important to adopt strategies that aim, on the one hand, to reduce situations of overload by controlling factors related to professional activity, and on the other hand, to support staff in coping with stress factors that cannot be eliminated.

Developing stress management skills, negative emotions, problem-solving or decision-making can contribute to optimizing the ability to adapt to demands and subjective well-being.

On a personal level, I would consider the following methods that could help mitigate or eliminate the effects of stress and improve the quality of justice:

- Performing leisure activities/hobbies (reading, gardening, sports, language learning, etc.)
- Socializing with colleagues (informal meetings, sport associations, sharing moments of conviviality etc).
- Efficient time management to cope with long-term work (organising work so that it does not fall behind)
- Balanced way of life (maintaining a balance between the daily challenges and the inner feelings of the person)
- Effective management of emotions
- Spending quality time with family to restore balance
- Efficient prioritization of files to be solved

- Disconnection from court work through periods of leave, time for rest
- Appreciation from colleagues, management
- Calling for a postponement of the case, until you feel sure/confident enough to solve the case
- Separation of work and private life
- Avoiding conflict situations.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

Recently, legislative amendments have been adopted to the primary and secondary legislation introducing the following procedures and tools to monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being, as well as to provide specialised support through psychologists employed at the level of the courts of appeal and the prosecutor's offices attached thereto, the High Court of Cassation and Justice, the prosecutor's office attached thereto, the specialised DNA and DIICOT structures, and at the level of the SCM, the NMI and the JI.

These procedures and tools consist of:

- Periodic psychological assessment of magistrates: it takes place every 5 years, it is carried out by the evaluation committee set up at the level of the court/prosecution office/institution, it is completed by indicating the recommended/not recommended grade, with the obligation, in the case of the non-recommended grade, to follow a 6-month psychological counselling programme together with a psychologist from the judiciary or from outside, with the possibility of changing it and/or modifying or adapting the counselling programme depending on necessity and evolution;
- Permanent psychological assistance, which may take several forms: on request, individually (with the possibility of using the Mindapp system for viewing specializations and trainings and establishing a counseling program including online); on request, collectively; participation in personal development sessions organized, at least quarterly, by psychologists from the judiciary; carry out a climate analysis, every 3 years and whenever necessary.
- In addition, the following shall be added: the obligation of magistrates to participate, annually, in an individual meeting with the psychologist and to participate at least once a year in the sessions for the development of specific psychological skills, organized by the psychologist.

Within the framework of the CPCI project, mentioned before, the evaluation tool '*Wellbeing Inventory in a Professional Context CSM SBP*' was developed, available to psychologists working in the system and beneficial to magistrates as it provides psychological assistance in the framework of periodic psychological evaluation procedures or on request in the framework of individual counselling activities.

The '*Wellbeing Inventory in the Professional Context of the SCM SBP*' was developed with the aim to assess well-being and related factors specific to the professional context of magistrates. To achieve this goal, three categories of variables studied in the JD-R theoretical model were identified and selected and a questionnaire was developed for

each category. Hence the name of the instrument: Inventory of the Superior Council of Magistracy (CSM) – SBP (of the State of Good in the Professional Context), or, in short, CSM SBP.

The tool therefore consists of 3 sections (each for one of the major dimensions included): Requirements for the position; Professional resources; Well-being.

In turn, each dimension takes into account a series of factors, 5 for each dimension (5 types of requests, 5 types of resources, 5 indicators of well-being), without these factors being considered as subdimensions or facets, but rather categories of instances in which job requests and resources can originate, as well as types of manifestations of well-being, understood in a broader sense.

The standardized version of the tool includes 98 items that operationalize JD-R factors and 2 special validation items (with the role of checking the quality of responses), totaling 100 items per form, three parallel forms being developed.

The Well-Being Dimension (SB) is formed by embedding in a composite score a wide range of components, targeting both positive and negative manifestations of well-being in a professional context.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

Among the actions aimed at managing health and well-being at the workplace, an important factor in motivating and supporting positive changes can be represented by the option, within the continuous training program for staff, for seminars aimed at developing the skills necessary to effectively address difficult situations encountered or acquiring useful knowledge in increasing personal efficiency.

At the level of the National Institute of Magistracy, as part of the continuous training program, personal development and neurolinguistic programming sessions are organized, which include, for example, topics such as: intra- and interpersonal communication; self-knowledge (how do we work? influence on personal and professional life); flexibility (behavioural modelling); development plans. Also, sessions and activities dedicated to personal development, as well as other topics such as stress management, time management, etc., are constantly being organized by psychologists working at the level of the judiciary. Since 2023, when many psychologists have been employed in the above-mentioned courts, prosecutors' offices and judicial institutions, these activities have expanded. The Mindapp IT platform, operationalised in the course of 2024, offers functionalities for organising and participating in online sessions, across the country and not only locally as they used to be.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

Judicial institutions and courts in the country carry out preventive, corrective and personnel protection activities by identifying problematic aspects from the perspective of the degree of work demands, as well as their consequences on the state of comfort and psychological health.

The presidents of courts, in particular the presidents of the courts of appeal, their counterparts in the prosecutor's offices and the heads of the SCM, the NMI and the JI, are directly involved in the organisation and management of periodic psychological assessment procedures and, in addition, are the beneficiaries of the conclusions of the regular organisational climate analyses carried out by psychologists.

Thus, psychologists within the judiciary perform, at least once every 3 years, or whenever necessary, an analysis of the organizational activity at the level of the court of appeal and of the courts in its constituency, at the level of the prosecutor's office attached to the courts of appeal and of the subordinated prosecutor's offices, at the level of the High Court of Cassation and Justice, of the prosecutor's office attached to it, at the level of the specialized units DNA and DIICOT, and at the level of the NIM, CSM, IJ, in order to diagnose possible systemic malfunctions, in order to make the act of justice more efficient and to improve working conditions, which they submit to the management/leaders of institutions, in order to take the necessary measures.

Relevant tasks of psychologists employed in the judiciary include, in addition to the above are: assessing the quantity, quality and efficiency of human resources in order to optimize work tasks, reorientation within the court and training certain professional skills; providing psychological assistance to the staff in order to facilitate the accommodation with the specific requirements of a certain post and the integration of new employees in the working team; mediate interpersonal conflicts affecting the quality of employment relationships with a view to reducing or resolving them; development of organizational development programs and adaptation of organizational diagnostic tools; ensuring motivational and aptitude training of human resources - training intrinsic motivation, memory capacity, self-control capacity, communication skills and optimization of attention; providing, upon request, psychological counseling to staff in case of confrontation with critical existential situations, including professional ones, in order to optimize performance and ensure personal and interpersonal comfort in the organizational environment; organizing, quarterly, sessions to develop specific psychological skills for staff.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

Despite the results obtained under the CPCI project and even if the institutional and legal framework in which the psychology activity is carried out at the level of the courts, personally I would consider that there is still room for improvement for the current measures to support and promote judicial well-being.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

The draft CPCI and the legislative and organisational reforms carried out in the field of psychological assistance to magistrates preceded the adoption of the Declaration.

I am not aware of any steps in order to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

In my opinion, grounded on the results of the above mentioned study, at an institutional level, efficient stress management measures could be:

- More efficient organization of the court in the context of high workload / managerial fairness (use of all resources, balanced distribution of files, management of workload and reduction of the number of tasks),
- Finding solutions to fill vacancies (employing more magistrates to avoid overcrowding),
- Improving communication issues, dialogue with colleagues on issues and finding solutions / creating support groups to share good practices,
- Providing psychological help from a well-informed person (psychologists) or having a psychologist at the courts to regularly collect data on existing problems and conduct periodic psychological assessments,
- Purchasing a computer system/program to help in the documentation/support activity more consistent on the IT side,
- the president of the court to play a more proactive role in cases of complaints or investigations of judges;
- Organising specific stress management courses and ensuring well-being
- Annual regulation of the activity of judges (e.g. German model),
- Building a canteen/dining room for dining with colleagues in order to facilitate informal interaction,
- Defending the image of magistrates (at national level),
- Changing the way presidents are appointed (more transparency),
- Decent working conditions (providing adequate workspaces),
- Greater involvement of the management in supporting the role of the psychologist and specific methods of psychology in ensuring well-being at work, as well as a recognition of the activities carried out by these professionals in support of ensuring a quality act of justice.
- Conducting periodic psychological evaluations.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

Within the CPCI Project, strategies on the well-being of judges were developed, which resulted in the development of the Procedure for the periodic psychological evaluation of judges, approved by Decision No. 2333/2023 of the Section for Judges of the Superior Council of Magistracy.

Also, within the project, some proposals to supplement the Rules of Internal Order of the courts were made, in the sense of stipulating the competences of the psychology cabinet at the level of the courts of appeal in the specialized field of work and organizational psychology, as well as the types of activities carried out.

It was also stipulated that psychologists have the obligation to conduct quarterly personal development programs at the level of the courts of the court of appeal, an aspect meant to contribute to an increase in the supportive role of the organization from the perspective of developing skills that allow a better management of professional requests.

With regard to judges facing complex or extremely difficult situations in their professional activity, the possibility of applying to the court psychologist on request to follow individual or group counselling programs was regulated.

In addition to this, in order to prevent situations of professional mismatch among judges, they are obliged to participate once a year in a meeting with the court psychologist.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

The implementation of the new strategy of the SCM was a matter of debate, both formal and informal at the level of the main stakeholders of the judiciary.

While the project was welcomed by the large majority of the judiciary, some voices expressed concern mainly regarding the respect of the private life of judges and their independence.

The acceptance of this game changing strategy will be a matter of time and management of change. The adoption of the current opinion should support the implementation of such strategies.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

As mentioned before, the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level is limited due to the specificity of the organisational culture that stigmatises judicial stress and implicitly hinders efforts to support judicial well-being, that is perceived by some members of the professional body as vulnerabilities of the judge that may affect the prestige of the judicial office.

This fear of stigmatization is still very pressing within the professional body, correlated with a lack of confidence in the confidentiality of the psychological act carried out in the organizational environment, as well as in the methods associated with it.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

Given the limitations identified, the Superior Council of Magistracy supported the development of training actions at the level of the judiciary, by which judges would be presented with the benefits of the project.

Magistrates can access occupational stress management programs and benefit from psychological counseling, upon request.

Within the CPCI Project, these situations were the subject of analysis and proposals were developed through which judges can access the psychological services offered by other professionals in the judicial system through the Mindapp application or by psychologists with the right of free practice, in a private system.

In my opinion, awareness-raising actions at the level of the professional body of judges, in order to prevent prejudices and increase confidence in the psychological act would be a good option that CCJE could also promote.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

No.

Netherlands / Pays-Bas

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level? The well-being of judges and all employees of the judiciary is important for a well-functioning judiciary. For this reason, all employees can make use of the so-called Mental Check Up (MCU) every two years. An MCU is an interview in which an employee's mental resilience is assessed. The interview looks at (work) stressors as well as sources of energy and resources inside and outside the work context. Together with an expert, we examine the balance, the mental state of an employee and what he/she can do to stay mentally fit. Self-insight and personal influence are addressed. If necessary, stress reactions can be explained, stress-reducing advice can be given and steps that can be taken if coaching or help is needed can be discussed. There are also the legal requirements from the Working Conditions Act (Arbeidsomstandighedenwetgeving) that the Judiciary complies with. At the Judiciary level, as well as at departmental and individual level, occupational risks are periodically and continuously assessed. Where necessary, measures are developed and taken.
2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary? There is a focus on well-being in the broad sense. For instance, in addition to the above activities, there is a national vitality week twice a year with national and local online and physical activities focused on vitality and well-being. There is also a working conditions consultation hour: meeting with the company doctor for advice on work-related health complaints, before absence due to illness. This is accessible to the employee without the intervention of a manager. There is also company social work (BMW). The company social worker offers professional support to employees who encounter personal or work-related problems. They help deal with stress, work pressure, private problems, conflicts at work or changes in the work situation. With regard to work pressure, several projects are launched to reduce the work pressure among judges. In addition, intervention tools for Workload (curative and preventive) are being developed.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?
In the 2022 employee survey, judges had high scores on engagement (7.8 on 10 point scale). They perceived their work as inspiring (8.4). In addition, Work Survey Domestic Administration (Werkonderzoek Binnenlands Bestuur) showed that of all the organisations approached for the survey, judges and officers from the judiciary appear to be most proud of their organisation: 72% of the 380 participants judiciary employees. This is higher than other government organisations (departments, provinces, the state level and municipalities).

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction? The above-mentioned survey from 2022 showed workload in particular. This also emerges annually as number one stressor from the MCU interview reports. In addition, the judiciary is increasingly under a magnifying glass in the media.
5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being? Especially around the issue of workload, it should not be forgotten that it is very person-dependent. It really takes a tailor-made approach to tackle it. A study on workload showed that judges experience pressure to deliver quality: from the organisation, the culture and their own professional views.
6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why? The areas of criminal law and family and juvenile law, but also increasingly administrative law, are known as areas of law that can be mentally taxing. In addition, it is conceivable that media attention generates pressure.
7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice? Resilience and Wellbeing is very person-dependent. In general terms, one could say that work experience can help put impactful cases into perspective. Incidentally, no large-scale research has been conducted on this within the judiciary.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work? Attention to perfectionism, making time for reflection on own resilience through the MCU interview. In addition, focus on own well-being using the 5-pillar model (attention to mental and physical rest, nutrition, physical exertion and mental relaxation).
9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored. The Council for the Judiciary monitors the psychosocial workload of all employees at the judiciary through periodic reports of the occupational health and safety service including reports of the occupational health and safety service and occupational social work. In addition, there are annual reports of MCU interviews and periodic employee surveys (last in 2022, there will be one in 2025/2026).
10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided. Voor de Rechtspraak zijn verschillende trainingen beschikbaar waaronder
 - a. **Mental Check Up.** The MCU is an interview in which an employee's mental resilience is assessed. The interview looks at (work) stressors as well as sources of energy and resources within and outside the work context.

- b. **Respectful cooperation in a safe working environment.** This training provides (self-)insight into the impact your behaviour can have on others and the extent to which this behaviour can be experienced as (un)desired. The training also provides concrete tools for discussing behaviour, with the aim of jointly creating a (working) environment in which we take each other's limits into account and contribute to a relaxed collaboration.
 - c. **Safe Justice: with each other, for each other** (e-learning). To protect each other and the organisation, we work on a resilient Judiciary. That starts with you as a colleague. With this e-learning, you learn to recognise risks and how to act when faced with them. By being aware of possible risks and knowing how to deal with them, we strengthen each other's safety and our collective resilience.
 - d. **Security at courtroom session** (e-learning). In this e-learning, you will learn what applicable safety procedures and safety measures are in place to prevent or mitigate aggression and violence when it occurs. You will learn how to intervene if undesirable or aggressive behaviour occurs that could endanger order or safety in the courtroom.
 - e. **Verbal aggression: prevention and handling.** This course teaches you how to deal with verbal aggression effectively and professionally. The national 'zero-tolerance' guideline is the starting point: 'Emotion is allowed, aggression is not'.
 - f. **How perceptive are you?** (E-learning). Themes: Proper safeguarding (what information do you protect, how and why?), Work securely (how do you work safely with digital information?), Work with care (how do you work safely with 'offline' information?); Report immediately (where and how do I report (possible) incidents?)
11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being? *There is a national project to reduce workload. Local initiative is also encouraged. For instance, several courts are working together to eliminate backlogs. In addition, there is a legal obligation in the Netherlands to identify the work risks, including psychosocial workload, and if necessary to put measures in place and implement them in daily practice with an action plan. In the Netherlands, the courts are responding by drawing up an action plan for occupational risks for employees of the judiciary.*
12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient? *There is due consideration, as reflected in the above responses.*
13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.
We are not specifically aware of implementation of this declaration.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary? *The topic of wellbeing and resilience could be discussed more within the organisation. There is a flipside to the tenure of judges and the responsibility that is being felt. Another way to support this is the safeguarding and evaluation of the measures taken in the action plan relating occupational risks within the judiciary in the Netherlands.*
15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?
See the (practical) interventions mentioned under question (10)

A “Handreiking werkgeversverantwoordelijkheid mentaal belastend werk” has been developed from the Beveiligingsautoriteit (BVA - Security Authority Department). This document provides frameworks for facilitating the conversation between the judiciary as employer and a judge or court official as employee about customised (security) measures. In addition, this guide provides the judiciary with tools to fulfil this responsibility. In addition, there is a programme on Timely Justice (Tijdige rechtspraak) to contribute to the disposal of cases.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?
Not immediately. There is increasing collaboration within the judiciary to jointly address issues. For instance, there are several national initiatives around wellbeing and workload, as described earlier.
17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?
There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Customisation is needed.
18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?
Above all, it indicates that there must be and remain a focus on the issue of well-being throughout the organisation.
19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?
In terms of employment conditions and working conditions, much is well regulated in the NL. This benefits the welfare of judges.
For example, a full working week is set at 36 hours. Judges also (mostly) have the possibility of spreading these hours over the week in a way that suits them/their private situation (e.g. you can work 5 x 7.2 hours, but also 4 x 8 and 1 x 4 hours, or work 4 x 8 one week and 5 x 8 the next). Working hours can also (mostly) be adjusted; for instance, there is (in a general sense) the possibility to work less, but also to work more (40 hours per week). It is also possible (if work/session schedule allows) to work partly from home.
Judges also have an IKB budget (individual choice budget - 16.3% of salary) that can be used for various purposes as they see fit. It is also possible to buy additional leave hours from the budget.
Judges are entitled to 4 weeks' holiday a year, plus (at least) 64 IKB leave hours. In total, up to 3,600 hours of leave may be saved (in the case of a 36-hour working week).
Furthermore, a parental and care leave scheme applies (also) to judges

Norway / Norvège

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

In my opinion it is not recognised a contributing factor, and at least not an important factor. and beyond what is considered necessary for other state employees. Some aspects are well covered, such as technology and efficiency.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

No

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

- Sufficient support personnel for judges.
- Increased focus on security for judges at work.
- A reasonably balanced workload for judges.
- Independent system for fixing and securing the judges remuneration.
- Good working conditions, modern court facilities and up to date ICT-systems.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

The absence og lack of attention to the issues mentioned under 3, above. I might add that focus in Norway has recently been on new technology rather than implementing the technology in a way that include the judge's other aspects of well-being in the implementation of the technology.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

No stigma, but Norwegian judges are rather careful in addressing the issues at an individual level.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

I believe many judges feel considerable stress relating to family cases (child custody cases) and criminal cases involving sexual abuse of children. It is my understanding and experience that although counselling services are available in some courts, there is room for improvement at this point.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?
Judges at the first instance level sitting alone are probably more exposed than appeal court judges normally sitting in panels, but both groups are in my opinion exposed.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

- General awareness of issues of wellbeing by judges.
- Increased focus on judges well-being by the Association of judges, the court managements (in particular following evaluation conversations with peers) and the council.
- Awareness should be included in periodical training of judges, in the initial training before judges take office, but also as part of in-service training.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

Not to my knowledge, but the Association of judges has had long term dialogue with the council on issues of workload of judges.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

No training to my knowledge.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

There is no organised assistance service for judges in charge of the council or the Judges Association. I have no knowledge of systems at court level.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

No

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

Not to my knowledge.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

Improvement of physical working conditions is obviously important, and is ongoing in Norway ICT systems and technology is important and is improved over the last years. The poor security of judges should be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

Work on improved guidelines for processing of cases are being implemented in the courts.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

Lack of funding from the Parliament has been an obstacle for implementation of proper security systems in all courts, and should be a priority for the purpose of judges wellbeing.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

Portugal

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

Judicial well-being is recognized as crucial to judicial effectiveness in Portugal, leading to empirical studies, institutional support, and structured recommendations aimed at mitigating stress and promoting health within the judiciary. The connection between judicial well-being and the effectiveness of the judiciary is acknowledged, particularly in terms of how stress, workload, and working conditions affect judges' ability to deliver impartial justice.

The judiciary does not enjoy full autonomy in determining the conditions under which judicial functions are carried out (such as salaries, working hours, holidays, social security, pensions, equipment, and facilities, among others). The legislation that establishes the legal framework for the judicial profession, the structure of the judicial system, and the organization and functioning of the courts is primarily shaped by political decisions. These political choices play a critical role in influencing the working conditions within the courts, thereby impacting not only productivity but also absenteeism and the health of judicial professionals.

While Portugal has implemented comprehensive justice system reforms in recent years, these have primarily focused on efficiency, accessibility, and modernization rather than specifically addressing judicial well-being. Programs such as *Justiça + Próxima* and *Simplex +* aim to make the justice sector "more transparent, accessible and effective". Despite these indirect improvements, explicit acknowledgment or concrete governmental measures directly addressing the mental health and occupational well-being of judges (e.g., specialized psychological support programs, well-being policies, workload regulations explicitly linked to mental health considerations) have not been central to recent justice reforms.

Recent explicit recognitions and recommendations concerning judicial well-being in Portugal have emerged predominantly from empirical studies and initiatives promoted by Judicial Institutions and Professional Bodies (e.g., Conselho Superior da Magistratura, Associação Sindical dos Juizes Portugueses) and Academic Research and Universities (e.g., Observatório Permanente da Justiça of the University of Coimbra), which highlights the high levels of stress and burnout that judges face and their potential negative impacts. These institutions have filled a gap by directly studying occupational health among judges and producing data-driven recommendations and actions to improve judge's working conditions.

The High Judicial Council of Portugal, in collaboration with the Trade Union Association of Portuguese Judges, the Supreme Court of Justice, and the Courts of Appeal in Coimbra, Évora, Guimarães, Lisbon, and Porto, has partnered with the Permanent Observatory of Justice at the Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra. Together, they initiated a "Study on Working Conditions, Professional Burnout, Health, and Well-being of

Portuguese Judges.” This study, commenced in 2021, culminated in December 2023 with the release of a final report.

The primary objective of the study was to evaluate the working conditions, levels of professional exhaustion (burnout), and overall health and well-being of judges serving in the judicial, administrative, and tax courts across various jurisdictions in Portugal.

The study focused on three specific objectives:

- a. Providing a socio-legal profile of Portuguese judges, contextualized within their professional statutes and the structure and operation of the judicial system.
- b. Assessing the working conditions of judges serving in Portuguese courts.
- c. Formulating a series of programmatic recommendations regarding the professional statute of judicial magistrates, working conditions, burnout, health, and personal well-being.

To achieve these objectives, the study employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies:

- i. Conducting content analysis of relevant legislation and documentation related to the statutory and legal frameworks of the profession and the judicial system’s structure and operation.
- ii. Compiling and analysing literature, particularly on public policies and statistical data pertaining to the demographic and sociographic profile of judicial magistrates.
- iii. Undertaking exploratory and semi-structured interviews, holding discussion panels, and implementing a questionnaire survey.

One significant finding of the study was the high incidence of professional burnout among Portuguese judges. Among survey respondents, 36.2 percent reported a 'Medium-High' burnout risk level, while 16.7 percent fell into the 'High' risk group. The study also identified that judges routinely work at an intense pace, with extended hours, and face substantial quantitative, cognitive, and emotional demands. These conditions have been shown to disrupt the balance between professional and personal/family life.

Another notable finding is that, despite most judges having no history of sick leave and generally reporting positive self-assessments of their physical and mental health, a considerable proportion indicated high stress levels over the past year. This is in addition to the elevated risk of burnout. Contributing to this disparity is a judicial culture that traditionally promotes a narrative that downplays emotional challenges and minimizes the impact of stress on professional performance.

A few excerpts from testimonies:

« It's very difficult for me, apart from my daily work, to make the basic decisions during the course of a normal working day. I do most of the decision-making at home. At home in the evening ».

« I think that in order to get the job done, and to do a good job, it's not possible not to work every weekend, a very excessive number of hours during the week and sometimes even to take work on holiday. Because you can also do things with less commitment and to have

more time for yourself, but normally people also want to do things well and care about the people in the processes . »

« It's the weight of responsibility. The weight of doing justice because the case deserves it. It's difficult. (...) On the other hand, it also requires a lot of speed. The time of justice is not the time of other professions, you have to mature your ideas and when the Council presses for statistics, we have to be careful, because it's people's lives that we have in our hands, be it civil, criminal or labour ».

« We manage and put up with it, but it leaves dents in our mental health. Sometimes you only realise after a few years. In my case, I realised many years later how unbalanced my life was. I had too much work and not enough time for everything, and I managed a lot of stressful situations. That leaves its mark, even on our health ».

The data underscore the relationship between working conditions and health and well-being, underscoring the importance of recognizing and preventing psychosocial risks that may lead to burnout. Based on these findings, the study provides a comprehensive set of recommendations, including the establishment of an Occupational Health Office; awareness and training initiatives for judges, management, and assessment officials on occupational risk prevention; amendments to judicial inspection regulations; and the development of three strategic plans: a Health and Safety at Work Plan, a Work-Life Balance Plan, and a Gender Equality Plan.

The study employed a variety of methods, including interviews and an online survey with the cooperation of the Superior Councils of the Judiciary and Administrative and Tax Courts, and the Trade Union Association of Portuguese Judges. The final sample comprised 684 validated survey responses, accounting for 33.5 percent of the surveyed population—a notable response rate, exceeding that of many comparable national and international studies. The survey respondents had an average age of approximately 49 years, with the majority having over 15 years of service and living in households with children.

Additional highlights of the study include:

- Judges work an average of 46 hours per week, with over half working between 36-51 hours (54%) and about one-third exceeding 52 hours (31.6%).
- 68% report that they are required to work at a high pace all or nearly all of the time.
- Key stressors include case volume, large case management, and procedural deadlines, which 55.5%, 48.8%, and 44.5% of respondents respectively rated as 'very stressful'.
- Nearly half (47.8%) report significant challenges in balancing work and family life, with insufficient support mechanisms cited as a primary stressor.
- The study recorded elevated levels for indicators of depressive symptoms (2.90) and stress (3.27), both above national averages (2.35 and 2.70, respectively).
- The sleep problems indicator (3.85) also exceeded the national average (2.46).
- Notably, indicators for 'Valuing and Meaning of Work' remained positive among judges, serving as a counterbalance to burnout.

- Regarding burnout risk, 36.2 percent fell into the 'Medium-High' category, while 16.7 percent were at 'High' risk.
- Only 16.9 percent of respondents reported a 'Low' burnout risk.

These findings called for urgent consideration of interventions to improve the working conditions and well-being of Portuguese judges, ensuring they can continue to perform their duties effectively while maintaining a sustainable work-life balance.

On 30 October 2024, the High Judicial Council has approved the creation of an Occupational Health Office (OHO) with the aim of promoting the health and safety of judges, thus responding to the growing concern at European and national level about the mental and physical well-being of professionals.

This initiative is in line with the right to decent and safe working conditions enshrined in national legislation and in the European Pillar of Social Rights, which defends the protection of health and the adaptation of the working environment to the needs of workers.

This office will initially be staffed by an organisational psychologist who will coordinate with an external occupational medicine provider and the courts' management bodies to identify and mitigate professional and psychosocial risks.

According to a study by the Permanent Observatory of the Judiciary of the Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, many judges face significant psychosocial risks, such as high levels of stress and difficulties in reconciling work and private life, which makes it essential to strengthen support structures such as the GSO.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

While recent governmental justice reforms in Portugal have contributed indirectly to improving judicial well-being, the explicit addressing of judicial occupational health as a standalone priority has been primarily led by judicial institutions, professional associations, and academic studies rather than by direct government-led legislative reform initiatives. There remains scope for the government to explicitly integrate judicial well-being into the policy framework, following recommendations from recent national and international studies and institutional feedback.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

Recent studies highlight several positive aspects of judicial work that contribute to judges' satisfaction and well-being. There is generally a high level of satisfaction with opportunities for development, training, and career progression, which indicates that professional growth and the potential for advancement are significant sources of fulfillment for judges. The meaningfulness judges attribute to their work also stands out, with many perceiving their role in administering justice as important and impactful. This sense of purpose plays a vital role in their well-being.

The majority of judges view their profession as an avenue for continuous personal development and skill enhancement. More than half of the respondents agree that their work regularly allows them to learn new things, further contributing to job satisfaction. Motivation and engagement in their work are consistently high, with most judges reporting that they feel very or extremely motivated. This intrinsic connection to their duties fosters a deep sense of fulfillment.

Judges also exhibit high levels of self-efficacy, affirming their confidence in performing their professional responsibilities effectively. This sense of competence significantly enhances their professional well-being. Job insecurity is notably low, as their professional status offers a sense of stability and security, which alleviates stress and promotes overall well-being. Furthermore, a majority of judges express satisfaction with their latest placement within the judicial system, reflecting positive views about their career trajectories.

Self-assessment among judges reveals a high degree of satisfaction with the quality of their work. Many take pride in their legal reasoning and feel accomplished in their professional contributions, which serve as additional sources of well-being. Overall, the adoption of strategies aimed at improving working conditions is recognized as crucial to enhancing job satisfaction and fulfillment, underscoring the importance of these positive outcomes.

While stress factors are present, these findings emphasize the inherent and contextual elements of judicial work that provide judges with satisfaction and a sense of purpose. The perception of contributing to justice remains a fundamental and positive aspect of their profession, further enriching their overall sense of well-being.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

Judicial work in Portugal presents numerous challenges that contribute to stress and dissatisfaction among judges. Key issues include work overload, with an accumulation of cases, short deadlines, and extended hours, exacerbated by judicial reforms and performance evaluations.

Judges experience a lack of autonomy and control over their workload, coupled with social isolation inherent to their role. The judicial environment can foster negative attitudes, leading to psychological distress. Privacy concerns, lack of resources for decision-making, and involvement in controversial or emotionally challenging cases add to the stress. Work-life balance difficulties, including the duty to maintain personal privacy, are significant.

Judges face physiological consequences like hypertension and may resort to maladaptive coping strategies. Bureaucratic tasks, incorrect work distribution, and insufficient support staff further increase workload. Concerns about personal safety, participation in unpredictable trials, and conflicts with colleagues contribute to occupational stress and burnout. The pressure of being evaluated on procedural objectives, subject to disciplinary sanctions, and undergoing classificatory inspections adds to the stress. Technological issues, lack of control over case processing, and the pressure of working at high speed with frequent interruptions are additional stressors.

The judicial culture's tendency to reject emotional considerations can prevent judges from seeking help.

The studies show that these multifaceted challenges significantly impact judges' well-being and job satisfaction in Portugal.

5. **To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?**

The stigma surrounding judicial stress and professional challenges significantly hinders efforts to support judges' well-being in Portugal. Studies reveal that judges often struggle to discuss mental health issues, particularly burnout, within the judiciary. This reluctance stems from a culture that promotes emotional rejection and stress denial. One interviewed judge explicitly described mental health as a taboo in the magistracy, expressing discomfort in addressing the topic even with trusted mentors.

Research concludes that addressing identified stress symptoms is crucial. However, the judicial culture, known for rejecting emotion and denying stress's impact on professional performance, contributes to judges' resistance to taking medical leave and self-assessing their physical and mental health. This professional culture, associating the "ideal judge" with one capable of suppressing emotional aspects, leads to attempts to deny occupational stress experiences.

The consequences of this stigma are diverse and detrimental to judicial well-being support efforts:

- Underreporting of problems due to fear of appearing weak or incapable.
- Reluctance to seek psychological or medical help.
- Difficulty in implementing support measures due to lack of open discussion.
- Perpetuation of a denial culture where stress and burnout are seen as weaknesses.
- Negative impact on health and performance due to lack of recognition and support.

Overcoming this stigma by promoting a more open and supportive culture is essential to ensure the health and effectiveness of justice system professionals.

6. **Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?**

Yes, certain types of cases, due to their sensitive nature and high complexity, tend to pose a greater risk of judicial stress. Sources highlight several categories of cases that are particularly associated with elevated stress levels among judges.

Cases involving crimes against children and sexual offences are notably distressing, given their disturbing content and the weighty impact of judicial decisions on both victims and defendants. Judges handling such matters may experience a significant emotional burden and a heightened sense of responsibility. Similarly, cases of violent crime are also identified

as emotionally demanding, with their severity often exerting considerable pressure on judges.

Family and Juvenile Law cases are frequently cited as particularly stressful. Judges in this area often face difficult social situations involving vulnerable children and intense family conflicts. The responsibility of making decisions that deeply affect the lives of families and children—such as regulating parental responsibilities—can result in substantial emotional strain.

Large-scale or high-volume cases (including so-called "mega cases") are also seen as stress-inducing, due to the sheer volume of documents and facts to be assessed, often under tight procedural deadlines. Likewise, cases marked by legal and procedural complexity can increase cognitive stress, especially when they require in-depth technical knowledge and close attention to evolving legislation and jurisprudence.

Media-sensitive cases add another layer of stress, with judges subject to public scrutiny and pressure to render decisions aligned with public opinion, which can heighten anxiety and emotional strain. Finally, judges at the Constitutional Court and Supreme Court report the highest levels of stress, likely due to the increased responsibility of their roles, including constitutional review and the finality of their decisions.

In summary, legal areas involving emotionally and socially sensitive matters—such as criminal law (particularly violent and child-related crimes) and family law—alongside procedurally or legally complex cases and those with high media exposure, appear to pose the highest risk of stress. The subject matter, impact of decisions, and inherent emotional load all contribute significantly to the stress experienced by judges.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

Yes, there are other contextual factors that may affect judges differently in terms of their well-being, particularly jurisdiction and seniority or professional experience.

Occupational stress levels can vary significantly across jurisdictions. The Constitutional Court report the highest stress levels, likely due to the increased responsibilities associated with constitutional review and the final impact of their decisions. Supreme Court judges also report elevated stress. In contrast, judges at the Central Administrative Courts report the highest levels of perceived work overload, likely linked to the limited number of judges and courts in this area, resulting in heavier individual caseloads. Studies also notes that administrative and tax court judges tend to have a less positive perception of conflict resolution and of how their input is valued by management. Among them, first-instance judges report the greatest dissatisfaction across several indicators.

Specialized courts—such as criminal or family and juvenile courts—also pose notable cognitive and emotional challenges, particularly in cases involving violent crimes, sexual offences, or crimes against children, which are recognised stressors.

Career progression appears to reduce certain fears, such as disciplinary sanctions, possibly due to more seasoned knowledge of the limits and contexts in which sanctions apply.

Judges in higher courts tend to report less concern over disciplinary issues than first-instance judges.

The frequency of performance evaluations also differs by rank: first-instance judges undergo initial evaluations after three years and then every four to five years, while appellate judges are generally not subject to regular inspections. This may influence stress and perceived job security differently.

Experience can enhance the ability to cope with stress and professional challenges. However, studies suggests that while experience is often assumed sufficient to overcome difficulties, this may not always hold true—particularly in cases of physical or psychological exhaustion.

These factors produce different impacts for several practical reasons. The nature of the work and level of responsibility varies by jurisdiction, with higher courts dealing with decisions of broader impact, thus generating more pressure, while overburdened first-instance courts, such as in administrative and tax law, may cause exhaustion due to heavy caseloads.

The emotional toll of certain legal areas also differs; some expose judges to more psychologically demanding content. Evaluation systems and career stages affect stress perception—junior judges may feel more pressure from performance reviews, while senior judges may face stress related to advancement or institutional responsibilities.

Differences in resources and support also play a role; variations in staff and infrastructure can directly influence workload and stress levels. Judges' experience and coping mechanisms can mitigate stress, though accumulated exposure over time may increase vulnerability to burnout.

In short, the specific nature of judicial duties across jurisdictions, career stages and evaluation systems, the availability of institutional support, and individual experience all contribute to differing impacts on judges' well-being.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

There are several personal strategies that judges can adopt to manage work-related stress and safeguard their well-being, as inferred from the sources and our discussion. While the sources primarily emphasize organizational and systemic interventions, certain individual actions emerge as potentially effective:

Studies found that many judges tend to rely on maladaptive coping mechanisms. This suggests that consciously adopting adaptive coping strategies may help mitigate stress. Although specific strategies are not listed in the sources, one can infer the value of engaging with tasks in a thoughtful and structured way, even when facing workload pressure. Adaptive strategies may include activities that promote relaxation, such as physical exercise, hobbies, spending time with family and friends, or practicing mindfulness and meditation—even if these are not explicitly mentioned in the documents.

Social isolation is identified as a source of occupational stress for judges. Therefore, building and nurturing supportive relationships - whether with colleagues, friends, or family - can be a key personal strategy. Sharing experiences and challenges with others may offer emotional relief and alternative perspectives.

The sources highlight that high levels of stress and burnout can impair decision-making and lead to physical and mental health issues. Allocating time and attention to self-care routines, including adequate sleep, healthy eating, and leisure activities, can help strengthen resilience and maintain professional functioning.

While studies recommends organisational training for judges in resilience and stress management - such as e-learning sessions offered in other countries - judges can also individually seek learning opportunities in these areas. This may involve reading relevant materials, attending workshops or courses, or using relaxation techniques on their own initiative.

Studies also notes that many judges report symptoms linked to anxiety, depression, occupational stress, and burnout. However, professional culture may discourage acknowledgment of these experiences. Recognising signs of severe stress or burnout and seeking professional support—psychological or medical—when needed is essential to prevent the escalation of mental health problems.

It is important to acknowledge that the effectiveness of these strategies can vary depending on individual and contextual factors, such as jurisdiction and level of experience, as mentioned previously. Moreover, while personal strategies are valuable, the sources consistently emphasize that systemic and organisational measures are also crucial to effectively address the root causes of occupational stress in the judiciary.

9. **Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.**

There is currently no systematic and regular practice of measuring and monitoring the levels of stress and well-being of judges by judicial institutions in Portugal, although there is evidence of studies assessing these levels and recommendations for their implementation.

Following on from these recommendations, the High judicial Council, making use of its financial autonomy, is implementing a psychological support programme for judges (vd. question one, final part).

10. **Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.**

In Portugal, the Centro de Estudos Judiciários (Center for Judicial Studies) is responsible for the initial and ongoing training of judges and public prosecutors. While the CEJ's programs primarily focus on developing the technical skills and knowledge essential for judicial functions, there is limited publicly available information indicating that specific training modules dedicated to judges' personal well-being or mental health are formally included in these programs.

However, recent research underscores the significance of addressing the working conditions of judicial professionals in Portugal. The QUALIS project (*Quality of Justice in Portugal! The impact of working conditions on the professional performance of judges and prosecutors*), for instance, has examined the working environments of judges, public prosecutors, and court clerks, highlighting the impact of work intensity and organizational factors on their health and well-being. This suggests a growing awareness of the importance of well-being within the judiciary.

Given this context, while formalized well-being training may not currently be a standard component of judicial education in Portugal, the increasing recognition of its importance may lead to the development and integration of such programs in the future. However, in the present, they do not exist.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

In Portugal, efforts to support judicial well-being and alleviate stress have begun to receive institutional attention, primarily through procedural and organizational mechanisms under the responsibility of the Conselho Superior da Magistratura (CSM).

Until the occupational health office is fully operational (vd. Question 1, final part), the regulatory framework—particularly the Regulamento n.º 1327/2024, which governs instruments of judicial mobility and accumulation of functions—incorporates several indirect mechanisms aimed at mitigating judicial workload and promoting a balanced distribution of duties.

One of the key strategies involves workload management through judicial mobility. This includes the reassignment of judges to different courts or jurisdictions, allowing for a more equitable distribution of judicial tasks, as well as the reassignment of specific cases to judges other than the initially assigned judge. Additionally, judges may be assigned cumulative duties in more than one court, provided this does not adversely affect the performance of their primary judicial role. These measures are designed with particular attention to situations involving health-related absences, maternity and paternity leave, or a reduction in working capacity.

Importantly, the regulation ensures that any application of these measures is subject to prior consultation with the judge involved and depends on their consent. This procedural safeguard respects judicial autonomy and ensures that individual capacity and willingness are taken into account. Furthermore, the regulation provides logistical and financial support to mitigate the burdens that might arise from mobility or workload redistribution. This includes reimbursement of travel expenses, daily allowances, and financial compensation for the accumulation of duties. Where the workload justifies it, bonuses may also be awarded, based on an evaluation of the complexity, volume, or nature of the service rendered.

Transparency and oversight mechanisms are also embedded in the regulatory framework. The criteria and decisions regarding the application of these measures must be publicly disclosed, and their outcomes are subject to review and reporting by the CSM and local court presidents. Although these measures are not explicitly framed as psychological or well-being initiatives, they reflect an institutional effort to address potential sources of stress and overload within the judiciary.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

Recent reforms in Portugal's judicial system, including the creation of the Occupational Health Office (Gabinete de Saúde Ocupacional, GSO) by the Superior Council of Magistracy (CSM) in October 2024, mark a pivotal shift toward addressing long-standing concerns about judicial well-being. However, while this initiative responds to critical findings from academic studies and aligns with European labor standards, significant gaps remain in Portugal's approach to mitigating occupational stress, burnout, and systemic inefficiencies affecting judges.

The creation of the GSO signifies Portugal's recognition of judicial well-being as a priority, yet current measures remain insufficient to counteract systemic stressors. Without addressing workload intensity, infrastructural decay, and legislative gaps, occupational health initiatives risk becoming symbolic rather than transformative. As European counterparts demonstrate, holistic reforms—combining psychosocial support, workload redistribution, and legal protections—are essential to safeguarding judicial efficacy and dignity. Portugal's journey toward adequate judicial well-being has begun, but the path forward demands bolder institutional commitments.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

Even before the Nauru Declaration, Portuguese judicial authorities and associations had begun addressing the strains on judges. Awareness was growing that judges face high stress, heavy workloads, and other psychosocial risks. The 24-month study, conducted by the Permanent Justice Observatory (OPJ) of the University of Coimbra, surveyed hundreds of judges and included interviews and legal framework analysis. It aimed to diagnose problems and recommend solutions “quanto ao estatuto dos magistrados judiciais, às condições de trabalho e ao desgaste profissional e bem-estar pessoal” (regarding judges' status, work conditions, professional burnout and personal well-being). This proactive initiative – funded by the ASJP, the Conselho Superior da Magistratura (CSM) (Judicial High Council), the Supreme Court, and Appellate courts – demonstrated that Portugal's judicial community was already mobilizing to improve well-being before the Nauru Declaration's adoption.

The study's authors and stakeholders quickly drew connections between these issues and the principles later echoed by the Nauru Declaration – namely, that judicial well-being must be recognized, not stigmatized, and proactively managed.

Immediate Reactions and Calls to Action

The publication of the study in October 2023 sparked swift reactions within Portugal's judiciary. The ASJP (Judges' Association) voiced deep concern and pressed for immediate measures and urged the CSM – the body governing judges' careers and discipline – to intervene immediately to address judges' mental health needs. In media statements, the ASJP stressed that it is imperative to catch early signs of professional stress and ensure judges are not forced to work when ill, for the sake of both the judges and the public they serve.

The study's authors themselves outlined a reform agenda in line with improving well-being. They recommended: (a) rethinking court management models to boost efficiency and redistribute workloads; (b) revising the system of performance evaluation and disciplinary oversight for judges, which many feel incentivizes overwork and “working for the statistics” ; (c) strengthening communication between government and judicial authorities to jointly address resource needs; (d) achieving more efficient human resource management, including hiring sufficient support staff; (e) instituting a regular assessment of judges' working conditions; (f) the creation of an occupational health office dedicated to the judiciary; and (g) providing training in stress management and burnout prevention for judges . These proposals directly align with the Nauru Declaration's ethos that judicial institutions must foster healthy, supportive work environments for judges. Indeed, the call to create an occupational health unit and to provide stress-management education mirrors the declaration's emphasis on giving judges tools and institutional support to maintain well-being.

The Conselho Superior da Magistratura (CSM), as the judiciary's governing council, responded to these concerns with concrete initiatives that effectively implement the declaration's principles. In late 2024, the CSM announced the creation of a Gabinete de Saúde Ocupacional (GSO) – an Occupational Health Office for judges. This new office is explicitly aimed at promoting the mental and physical health and safety of magistrates, “respondendo a uma preocupação crescente a nível europeu e nacional com o bem-estar” dos juizes (responding to a growing European and national concern with judges' well-being) . The CSM underscored that this initiative aligns with the fundamental right to dignified, safe working conditions, as enshrined in Portuguese law and the EU's European Pillar of Social Rights.

In its first phase, the GSO is staffed by an *organizational psychologist* who will coordinate with an external occupational medicine company and court management bodies. Its mandate is multifaceted: identifying and mitigating psychosocial risks judges face, analyzing and improving workplace conditions, and preventing work-related illnesses or burnout. The GSO will also organize training sessions on stress management and burnout prevention, equipping judges with coping strategies. The overarching goal is to foster a healthier work environment “com benefícios diretos para a qualidade de vida dos juizes e a eficácia dos tribunais” (with direct benefits for judges' quality of life and the effectiveness of the courts). This initiative operationalizes several Nauru Declaration points – it treats judicial well-being as a priority, provides preventive support, and attempts to normalize seeking help (reducing stigma).

Beyond the GSO, the CSM has signaled openness to other structural changes. According to media reports, the CSM intends to streamline procedures for judges' medical leave or early retirement in cases of serious, irreversible health problem. In other words, if a judge is suffering severe long-term burnout or illness, the council wants to ensure a compassionate, efficient process for relieving them of duties (with appropriate benefits), rather than leaving both the judge and their court in limbo. This plan reflects an understanding that sustaining judicial well-being sometimes means allowing those unfit to serve to step aside with dignity – again echoing the declaration's principle that “judicial wellness must be recognized and supported, not stigmatized”.

It should also be noted that the CSM was a co-sponsor of the 2022–23 well-being study and hosted the national judicial conference where the results were presented. By doing so, the

CSM demonstrated institutional commitment to diagnosing the issues. Now, through steps like the GSO and potential policy tweaks, the Council is moving from diagnosis to action.

These actions position Portugal's judiciary at the forefront of implementing the Nauru Declaration's recommendations within Europe.

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

Judicial institutions and courts in Portugal can significantly enhance support for judges' well-being, thereby contributing to the effective functioning of the judicial system. Various measures identified in sources can be grouped into several areas of intervention.

Firstly, it is essential for judicial institutions to implement a systematic and regular practice of measuring and monitoring the stress and well-being levels of judges, using validated protocols. This evaluation would allow early identification of problems and direct interventions more effectively.

Secondly, sources point to the need to improve procedural and human resource management mechanisms in courts. This may include better distribution of workload, reviewing procedural goals to avoid excessive pressure, and ensuring adequate human and material resources for the performance of functions. It is crucial to change the legislation that frames procedural and human resource management to promote better working conditions and reduce stress factors. Institutions should invest in improving environmental conditions in courts, including air quality and lighting. Improving equipment and computer systems is also essential to reduce stress associated with technological failures. It is important to rethink the competencies of judges, transferring administrative tasks to other judicial actors, such as judicial staff, to free judges for jurisdictional tasks.

Thirdly, institutions should create mechanisms for early detection and intervention in case of risk of professional burnout and impacts on health and well-being. This may involve implementing individualized psychological support programs and creating a support hotline. The creation of an Occupational Health Office is suggested to coordinate and implement measures to support the health and well-being of judges, as well as to facilitate professional reintegration in cases of absence due to illness. Inspired by examples from other countries, Portuguese institutions may consider placing psychologists alongside second-instance courts, similar to the initiative proposed in France. It is important to raise awareness about the use of psychological support hotlines and demystify the use of this type of help.

Fourthly, training in stress management strategies and burnout prevention should be promoted for judges. This training should be articulated with other entities of the judicial system and specialized institutions. Training should also include topics related to professional risks and their impacts on health and well-being, especially for judges who perform inspection functions. Organizing e-learning sessions on resilience and stress management, as implemented in the United Kingdom, can be an effective way to reach a larger number of judges.

Fifthly, it is essential to change the organizational and professional culture to prevent situations of inequality and vulnerability, promoting good professional practices that ensure the necessary balance between the different dimensions of judges' lives. Institutions should

promote a work environment that supports the reconciliation between professional and personal and family life.

Lastly, it is important to look at disciplinary action in contexts associated with health problems, implementing measures that actively promote personal recovery and professional reintegration, rather than merely punitive action.

The implementation of these measures, in an articulated manner and with the involvement of court management bodies and judges themselves, can significantly contribute to the increase in the well-being of judicial magistrates in Portugal, which, in turn, will have a positive impact on the quality of administered justice. The creation of instruments that improve the articulation between the various institutions with management competencies is also essential for the effectiveness of these measures.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

The Integrated Procedural Information Service (SIIP) is a computer application developed with the support of the Portuguese Superior Council of the Judiciary (CSM). This digital tool was created to facilitate the organisation, analysis and presentation of evidence in complex criminal cases.

SIIP makes it possible to integrate facts, evidence and people in a simple way, ensuring more agile and structured management of information throughout all stages of the process. The application is especially useful for so-called 'mega-cases' or cases of greater complexity, allowing judges to study and prepare large volumes of information more efficiently.

In addition, SIIP comes with effective technical support, including practical training and direct support for users. The tool is constantly evolving, with plans to integrate artificial intelligence, such as automatic transcriptions and minute-taking, which will make the work of judges and criminal police agencies even more efficient.

The Integrated Procedural Information Service (IPIS) can be considered a strategy that contributes to the well-being of judges, especially in the context of dealing with sensitive and highly complex cases. By facilitating the organisation, analysis and presentation of evidence, the SIIP helps to reduce the workload and stress associated with managing large volumes of information. This allows judges to focus more on their judicial duties and less on administrative tasks, thus improving the efficiency and quality of their work.

In addition, the integration of advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence, into the SIIP can further alleviate the pressure on judges by automating repetitive tasks and enabling more agile case management. In this way, SIIP not only improves operational efficiency, but also contributes to a healthier and more sustainable working environment for judges.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

Yes, there are several problems and challenges in Portugal concerning the development and implementation of strategies to support judges' well-being at both the institutional level and within the courts.

A significant challenge lies in the fragmented nature of court management, with responsibilities divided between political authorities like the Ministry of Justice and judicial authorities such as the Superior Councils of the Judiciary and the Administrative and Tax Courts. This lack of unified management hinders the creation of a coherent and coordinated strategy for judges' well-being, affecting both the formulation and implementation of policies and measures across short, medium, and long-term timelines. The limited collaboration among institutions responsible for infrastructure, equipment, and human resource management further complicates efforts in this regard.

In addition, sources highlight the limited capacity of court management bodies to handle local human resources and infrastructure, as these remain dependent on structures managed by the Ministry of Justice. This dependency constrains the autonomy of courts in implementing tailored measures for well-being that address their specific needs. The organizational and professional culture poses another hurdle; changing ingrained practices and fostering a culture that openly values well-being and encourages seeking support is a slow and complex process. The stigma associated with seeking professional help for stress or burnout further deters judges from accessing necessary support services.

Another challenge is the complexity and fragmented management of IT systems in the courts. The division of responsibility for IT infrastructure across different institutions hampers improvements that could alleviate technological stress. Moreover, reconciling the need for disciplinary actions with an understanding of professional burnout and health issues is problematic. Punitive measures in cases of illness can worsen situations rather than resolve them.

To address these institutional and organizational obstacles, solutions such as improving coordination and collaboration between institutions responsible for court management are essential. Establishing formal mechanisms for dialogue and cooperation among entities like the Superior Councils and the Ministry of Justice can pave the way for cohesive strategies. Additionally, creating a dedicated office within the Superior Councils to focus exclusively on judicial well-being plans and risk prevention measures could ensure the prioritization and continuity of these initiatives while providing support to central and local management bodies.

Investments in better court resources, including human, technological, and material assets, are also crucial. Addressing identified stress sources, such as outdated IT equipment, is an important step. Promoting local autonomy for courts in managing human resources and infrastructure, within the framework of a national strategy, allows for tailored responses to individual courts' needs. Continuous training programs on well-being, stress management, and psychosocial risk prevention for judges and management staff can transform organizational culture and reduce barriers to seeking psychological support.

Confidential and accessible psychological support services, such as helplines and counseling, should be widely promoted. Disciplinary procedures need to be revised to incorporate a better understanding of professional burnout and health issues, favoring measures focused on recovery and reintegration rather than punishment. Transparency and clear criteria in competitions for accessing higher courts can help reduce anxiety and stress

associated with these processes. Drawing inspiration from best practices in European and international judicial systems offers valuable insights and models for the Portuguese context.

Active involvement of judges and their representative associations in developing and implementing these strategies is essential to ensure their relevance, effectiveness, and acceptance. The commitment from all institutions involved is fundamental to recognizing the importance of judges' well-being and its impact on the quality and efficiency of justice in Portugal.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

Studies point out several problems and challenges in Portugal regarding the development and implementation of strategies to support judges' well-being on an individual level. These challenges can hinder the adoption and effectiveness of the measures proposed by institutions and courts.

One of the main challenges lies in the maladaptive coping strategies that some judges may adopt in response to occupational stress. Instead of seeking support or engaging in healthy stress-management practices, they might rely on less effective or even harmful mechanisms in the long term.

Another significant issue is the impact of work demands on judges' personal and family lives. The difficulty in balancing intense workloads with private life often leads to sacrificing personal and family time, contributing to stress and burnout on an individual level. This inability to separate professional and personal lives remains an individual challenge, even with institutional support.

The perception of social isolation and lack of social support in their work also represents an individual difficulty. Some judges may feel isolated due to the nature of their profession and find it hard to share their struggles, which may discourage them from seeking help.

While the stigma around seeking help has been discussed at an institutional level, this is also a challenge at an individual level. Some judges may hesitate to seek psychological support out of fear of being perceived as incapable or vulnerable. This individual resistance may prevent them from benefiting from available support interventions.

The difficulty in managing time and workloads on an individual level can persist as a challenge, even when institutional improvements are made. Developing skills in self-management and prioritization is essential on an individual level to mitigate stress.

The intrinsically stressful nature of the profession, which involves making decisions with direct impacts on citizens' lives and dealing with expectations of impartiality and justice, places a significant burden on each judge. Managing this individual responsibility, along with the pressures of deadlines and performance metrics, can be an ongoing challenge. Moreover, there may be individual resistance to adopting new practices or participating in well-being programs proposed by institutions. Changing habits and being open to new stress-management approaches require personal effort.

It is crucial to recognize that, although institutions and courts play a vital role in supporting judges' well-being, the adoption and effectiveness of strategies also rely on the individual commitment and effort of each magistrate. While creating a supportive institutional environment is essential, well-being is ultimately a shared responsibility that requires active participation from each individual.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

Based on the studies, approaches and solutions can be suggested to overcome the individual challenges related to the implementation of well-being strategies for judges in Portugal.

Developing adaptive and healthy coping strategies is essential for judges to manage stress effectively. The sources indicate that some judges resort to maladaptive strategies, such as only reading the conclusions of expert reports due to a lack of time.

Training and awareness programs can teach effective stress management techniques, including mindfulness, relaxation exercises, and the importance of hobbies and leisure activities outside work.

Promoting a balance between professional and personal life is also crucial. Given the impact of work demands on personal and family life, judges should be encouraged to define clear boundaries between work and private life. Establishing routines that include time for family, leisure, and rest is essential for preventing burnout. Training sessions can address work-life balance, including gender equality considerations.

Encouraging the pursuit and building of social support is another important aspect. Social isolation is a significant stress factor, and judges should be encouraged to build and maintain social support networks, both professionally—through colleagues and judge associations—and personally—through family and friends. Sharing experiences and mutual support can help reduce feelings of isolation.

Demystifying the pursuit of professional help and combating stigma are key components in improving individual well-being. The fear of being perceived as incapable or vulnerable might prevent judges from seeking psychological support. Awareness campaigns and the dissemination of confidential psychological support services can help break down barriers and promote an open culture regarding mental health. Sharing testimonials from judges who have benefited from such support can be particularly effective.

Developing self-management skills is another essential step. Individual difficulties in time and workload management contribute to stress, and judges can benefit from enhancing their skills in self-management, time organization, and priority setting. Training in these areas can help optimize work processes and reduce the sense of being overwhelmed. Active participation in well-being and training programs offered by institutions should also be encouraged. These programs provide judges with practical knowledge and tools to handle professional challenges while promoting self-care.

Encouraging individual reflection and self-care is equally vital. Judges should reflect on their sources of stress and the impact of their work on mental health. Adopting self-care

practices, such as mindfulness and regular engagement in pleasurable and relaxing activities, can strengthen individual resilience.

Lastly, recognizing the intrinsic stress of the profession and fostering resilience is imperative. The judicial role is inherently stressful due to the responsibility of decision-making and the exposure to emotionally challenging situations. Resilience training can help judges develop the capacity to handle these pressures in a healthy manner.

19. **Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?**

No further comments. The questionnaire approached the issue from an overall perspective, covering the several dimensions of the judges' well-being.

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?
In the Republic of San Marino, the issue of judicial well-being has not been formally addressed.
However, it should be noted that the peculiarities of the microstate, which provide for a jurisdiction of small size, both in the number of Judges and in the number of judicial cases, facilitates positive working conditions and opportunities for confrontation and cooperation between Judges, in the performance of the office responsibilities. Such a collaborative approach cushions potential causes of Judge stress since it allows for sharing the technical solution, and more generally, the responsibility for the decision, albeit in purely abstract and legal terms.
In addition, the Court is implemented some software of business intelligence by which the Head of the Court can constantly monitor the workflow of each judge, to prevent (and face) problems. This method is mentioned even in the annual reports written by the Head of the Court.
2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?
I think the Court management method is a work in progress that consent to identify problems and difficulty of each judge, thanks to the low number of judges.
However, it is always possible to improve the strategy to address the well-being judges.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?
From my point of view, judicial work is characterized by aspects and characteristics that can directly benefit Judges. They are subject only to the law and therefore can make decisions freely. In addition, their work is intellectually active, constantly different, which allows, therefore, for continuous exploration of new legal issues, avoiding a repetitive, monotonous, and demeaning (and therefore denoting) work process. A work context, therefore, constantly open to learning new knowledge. Judicial work also involves the performance by the Judge of functions of vital importance to the citizenry, with immediate impact on people's lives. Such aspects usually imply community recognition of the profession, can be a stressor, but also a rewarding factor for the Judge who can constantly perceive and reaffirm the importance and usefulness of his or her daily work.
4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?
Undoubtedly, judicial work is naturaliter stressful.

I believe there are several negative factors that, in particular, may increase or otherwise influence the risk of stress and dissatisfaction of the Judge.

First of all, one must consider the responsibility of the judicial decision, and the solitude required of the Judge to process it, and which are inevitable causes of stress. Such loneliness can therefore cause stress, especially if the decision to be made concerns particularly complex and sensitive issues that are given attention by public opinion.

To all this must then be added the need to balance unavoidable needs of productivity of the Judge (which impose for this reason the speedy adoption of decisions), with the relevance of the decision, which imposes at the same time an adequate, thorough and wise judicial choice in the concrete case. The need to indulge quantitative and productive requirements to the quality of the decision and its effects, contributes to the increased risk of frustration and stress of the Judge who is constantly engaged in balancing opposing needs to foster a speedy judicial response.

Moreover, another, more serious risk factor may also arise from the improper exercise of the right to criticize the work of the Judge by other institutions, the media and public opinion. A factor that if poorly managed negatively overexposes the Judge and his work, resulting in the tension that he may suffer a delegitimization of his work and role, demotivating him.

Therefore, virtuous conducts of all stakeholders in the Justice system, the media and other institutions are also essential to preserve the prestige and honorability of the individual Judge and the Judiciary as a whole and, consequently, to protect public trust in the Judicial Institution.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

From my point of view there is a generalized bias with respect to the issue related to the health status and stress state of the Judge. This bias I think may be an obstacle to the emergence of the problem and its subsequent solution.

I believe this stems from two concomitant factors.

The first relates to an objective underestimation of the extent, incidence and importance of the state of stress with respect to the proper and efficient performance of judicial work. The stress factor is, in essence, reputed to be an ordinary and common characterizing trait in the performance of difficult judicial mansions, underestimating its incidence in the proper performance of the Judge's functions, which require a lucid capacity for analysis, and an emotional and personal tranquillity.

The second element, on the other hand, relates to the fear that the emergence of the problem related to the Judge's state of stress and his health, may cause a general impairment on his decision-making and working abilities.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

From my point of view there are judicial issues that by their intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics cause a greater state of stress to the Judge, than others: and I believe that they are present in both the civil, commercial, and criminal fields.

In the civil sphere, I believe that cases related to minor subjects, and to the family, imply particular stress for the assigned Judge, both because of the frequent need for urgency of intervention, and because of the extreme litigiousness that ordinarily these litigations have, as well as because of the contextual involvement of minor

subjects, who are weak and defenceless and for this reason absorb particularly relevant emotional energies.

In the commercial sphere, on the other hand, I believe that cases related to the management of complex business crisis phenomena are particularly stressful for the Judge: this is both because of the extreme technicality required to deal with the subject matter, and because of the variety of profiles dealt with and requiring a multidisciplinary approach, as well as because of the need for urgency that is often present, and because of the primary protection profiles of considerable relevance from a socio-economic point of view, which mediatically overexpose the Judge's work.

In the criminal field, on the other hand, I believe that cases related to Criminal Organizations, physical safety, and also sexual crimes and violence against women and minors are particularly stressful. Here, too, in addition to the urgency needs, particularly complex technical-legal profiles emerge as much as emotionally absorbing aspects due to the particularly dramatic aspects that characterize them.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

I believe that professional experience, and therefore seniority, can be a determining factor that can reduce the incidence of stress on the Judge, since it usually favors the consolidation of a more structured professionalism, which can facilitate the management of the new judicial case, especially if it is complex or one characterized by the need for urgency.

In addition, I believe that the possibility of access to opportunities for constant confrontation and dialogue with other Judges can prove decisive in cushioning work stress, since they also favor a sharing of the problem and mutual help in identifying the legal solution with a consequent reduction of pressure on the head of the individual Judge.

In addition, I think that opportunities for confrontation outside the jurisdiction on the part of the Judge (e.g., with international bodies or in academic settings or through ongoing training) can also prove valuable. Such experiences, even though they imply additional responsibilities and work burdens (with potential risk of further stress) on the other hand, if well managed, allow for the consolidation of a diverse professionalism, and a structured, flexible (and therefore more effective) approach to problem solving.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

From my point of view there are many possible individual strategies, including by way of example:

- effectively organizing one's work and workday, so as to be able to devote time to private life as well;**
- ensuring that the Judge has access to a constant and qualified training plan, including with respect to the methodology for effectively dealing with the state of stress and health. This would allow him to consolidate and structure his professionalism and thus alleviate potential causes of stress in dealing with complex Court cases;**

- ensure that the individual Judge can avail himself of the services of a psychologist, free of charge, who can provide assistance when requested;
 - ensuring that individual Judges have opportunities to meet, even informally, among colleagues so as to also consolidate friendly relationships within the workplace: factors that can prove essential for sharing particularly intense and stressful moments. This also requires raising the ethics of individual Judges, who must avoid divisive attitudes and conduct in the workplace, which can undermine their serenity, with immediate detrimental effects on the entire work environment.
9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.
- At present, the institutions of the Republic of San Marino do not provide nor adopt instruments to monitor and measure the state of stress and the state of health of the Judge.**
- However, it should be remembered that the small size of the San Marino jurisdiction, which implies a limited number of judicial cases and Judges, allows continuous opportunities for interaction and confrontation between Judges who therefore can alleviate potential causes of stress arising from work through a collaborative and collegial approach to the various work issues.**
10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.
- No course is planned with respect to these issues.**
11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?
- San Marino prevents these cases through business intelligence software for workflow monitoring. There aren't cases of constant overworking and so, normally, the stress is provided by some single proceeding (or a group of them): these are faced with the Court management system, by which the judge usually asks for help.**
12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?
- I believe that the current measures are sufficient and effective.**
13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.
- No.**

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?
- In general, Judicial institutions could implement various initiatives to support the Judge's state of health, including:**
- a. **providing for the organization of dedicated meetings;**
 - b. **providing for the possibility, if requested and necessary, of using the assistance of a psychologist;**

- c. ensuring an open approach to listening to the Judge's needs, and the possibility of flexible management of his or her work;
 - d. ensuring that the Judge has a balanced division of workloads;
 - e. ensure a suitable, functional, flexible, and professionally equipped administrative structure of the Court, with appropriate digital and IT tools to facilitate the work of the Judge;
 - f. organize informal opportunities for Judges to meet each other, including outside the workplace as well as encourage team-building courses.
15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?
See the answers above about the effective Court management.
16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?
The Court management system has been effective to address the problems. Clearly, constant monitoring of the problem is important, also for the adoption of increasingly effective measures.
I should be considered also that the small size of the San Marino justice system allows for the possibility of dealing with any jurisdictional issues with immediate timeliness. Indeed, interlocutions with all stakeholders in the justice system, and with other public institutions, are particularly facilitated. This allows immediate confrontation for the identification and resolution of any problems.
17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?
Regarding the individual level, I think that the most immediate challenge today in the Republic of San Marino is to increase in the individual Judge the awareness of the importance of the topic for an effective performance of judicial competences, so as to encourage its emergence, deepening and discussion.
18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?
The difficulties expressed in the previous point could be addressed by initiating an action by the institutions that can first highlight the issue, in order to address it specifically.
19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?
No.

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country?

In Slovenia, judicial well-being is increasingly recognized as important through some formal and informal channels. Notably, the continuous training programme for judges includes intervention groups, which provide peer support and collaborative problem-solving opportunities in a structured environment. These groups allow judges to discuss professional challenges, share experiences, and receive collegial support, indirectly and directly supporting well-being.

Additionally, confidential counselling services are available to judges within the framework of the Ethical Commission attached to the Judicial Council, offering a resource for judges facing ethical dilemmas or personal challenges that may affect their judicial function. Nevertheless, systematic recognition at the legislative level remains a work in progress.

The Association of Judges of Slovenia, while primarily focused on judicial independence and professional standards, has begun to acknowledge well-being as a relevant concern. The Association has occasionally included well-being topics in their meetings, though their activities in this specific field remain limited compared to their other priorities.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country?

No, the current efforts are insufficient. Concrete measures, dedicated resources, and systematic approaches to judicial well-being are lacking. The initiatives that exist are often fragmented and depend on individual court leadership rather than representing a coordinated national strategy.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. Positive features of judicial work contributing to satisfaction and well-being:

- Intellectual stimulation and continuous learning
- The sense of delivering justice and making a meaningful contribution to society
- Professional autonomy and independence in decision-making
- Collegial relationships with fellow judges

4. Negative features of judicial work contributing to stress and dissatisfaction:

- Excessive caseloads and workload pressure
- Time constraints and procedural deadlines
- Public scrutiny and media criticism

- Isolation in decision-making
- Emotional burden of dealing with distressing cases
- Administrative burdens that detract from core judicial functions
- Inadequate resources and support staff

5. Stigma around judicial stress:

While stigma around judicial stress persists in Slovenia, there has been some progress in recent years. The traditional expectation that judges should demonstrate stoicism and emotional detachment has begun to evolve, with more judges willing to acknowledge professional challenges that impact their well-being. Open discussions about work-related stress are increasingly occurring among colleagues, particularly in informal settings and through the intervention groups.

6. Case types presenting higher risk of judicial stress:

- Family law cases involving child custody disputes or domestic violence
- High-profile criminal cases
- Complex criminal cases
- Cases with extensive media coverage and public attention
- Complex commercial litigation with significant economic implications
- Cases involving vulnerable individuals (children, victims of abuse)
- Cases where judges face personal threats or security concerns

7. Other contextual factors impacting well-being differently:

- Junior judges often experience higher stress due to limited experience and perceived scrutiny
- Judges in smaller, remote courts may face isolation and limited peer support
- Specialized court divisions (e. family) dealing continuously with traumatic content may experience cumulative stress
- Gender-specific challenges may exist, particularly for female judges balancing professional and family responsibilities
- Technological changes requiring adaptation to new systems without adequate training
- Frequent changes in legislation creating uncertainty and requiring constant adaptation and learning
- Hierarchical court structure creating pressure due to fear of reversal of decisions by higher courts, which may affect confidence and create additional stress, particularly for judges in first-instance courts

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. Personal strategies for judges to manage stress:

- Maintaining clear boundaries between professional and personal life
- Regular physical exercise and attention to physical health
- Mindfulness practices and stress management techniques
- Peer support and professional discussions with colleagues
- Continued education and professional development
- Time management techniques
- Pursuing interests and activities outside the legal profession

9. Measurement and monitoring of judicial stress:

While there is no formal system specifically designed to measure judicial stress levels in Slovenia, regular periodic satisfaction surveys are conducted throughout the judiciary, involving judges of all instances. These surveys include elements that indirectly assess well-being and work-related stress factors. The surveys provide valuable data on judges' perceptions of their work environment, resources, and challenges, offering some insight into potential stress factors. However, these instruments are not primarily focused on well-being or stress measurement, and a more specialized, standardized assessment tool specifically targeting judicial stress and well-being indicators would provide more comprehensive data for developing targeted support initiatives.

10. Training on well-being for judges:

Limited training exists specifically addressing judicial well-being. The Judicial Training Centre occasionally includes stress management as a component within broader professional development courses, but these are neither comprehensive. No systematic training exists specifically targeting judicial well-being at any career stage.

11. Court responses to alleviate stress:

Responses vary significantly between courts, depending primarily on court leadership. Some positive examples include:

- Intervision groups as a form of informal support to judges
- Discretionary workload adjustments for judges handling particularly stressful cases
- Voluntary mentoring programs for new judges
- Occasional training conducted by the National Training Centre on stress management
- Court programmes promoting health at the workplace, including ergonomic improvements, physical activity initiatives, and health awareness campaigns that address both physical and mental well-being aspects of the judicial profession

12. Sufficiency of current measures:

Current measures are clearly insufficient. They lack coordination, resources, and institutional backing. The approach to judicial well-being remains reactive rather than preventive, and many judges receive no support at all.

13. Implementation of the Nauru Declaration:

Slovenia has not yet taken specific formal steps to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being. No concrete implementation plan has been developed to date.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How judicial institutions might better support well-being:

- Developing a national strategy for judicial well-being with dedicated resources
- Establishing confidential counselling services specifically for judges
- Supervision for judges dealing with complex and/or sensitive cases
- Implementing regular, anonymous stress assessments to monitor the judicial workforce
- Creating formal mentoring programs pairing experienced and newer judges
- Providing more in-depth training on stress management and well-being
- Reviewing workload allocation systems to ensure fair distribution
- Recognizing well-being initiatives in judicial performance evaluations
- Improving court infrastructure and working conditions

The Association of Judges could potentially play a more significant role in advocating for judicial well-being initiatives, perhaps by establishing a dedicated working group or committee focused on this issue, and by leveraging their position to raise awareness about the importance of judicial well-being for the effective functioning of the justice system.

15. Strategies for dealing with sensitive and complex cases:

There is a need to develop more comprehensive strategies for handling sensitive and complex cases. Future approaches could include:

- Implementing formalized rotation systems for judges handling high-stress case types to prevent burnout
- Establishing structured debriefing protocols after particularly traumatic or high-profile cases
- Developing specialized training programs that combine legal expertise with psychological preparedness for difficult content
- Creating resource guides and best practices for managing emotionally challenging cases

- Forming specialized support networks for judges handling similar sensitive case types
- Considering workload adjustments that account for the emotional intensity of cases, not just their number or procedural complexity

These strategies would represent a significant improvement over the current ad hoc approaches and would provide more systematic support for judges dealing with the most challenging aspects of judicial work.

16. Problems at institutional/court level and solutions:

Problems:

- Limited financial resources allocated to judicial well-being
- Lack of institutional expertise in well-being programs
- Resistance from traditional judicial leadership
- Competing priorities in judicial administration

Potential solutions:

- Including well-being measurements in court performance metrics
- Developing partnerships with mental health professionals
- Incorporating well-being considerations into judicial budget planning

17-18. Individual-level challenges and solutions:

Challenges:

- Persistent stigma around seeking help
- Limited awareness of stress impacts on decision-making
- Cultural expectations of judicial stoicism
- Time constraints making self-care difficult

Solutions:

- Anonymous support services to overcome stigma
- Peer-led initiatives normalizing well-being discussions
- Educational programs on the neuroscience of stress and decision-making
- Leadership modelling of healthy work practices
- Recognition and incentives for balanced approaches to judicial work

19. Additional comments:

International cooperation and exchange of best practices with other European judiciaries could accelerate the development of effective programs while making efficient use of limited resources.

Spain / Espagne

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

In Spain, judicial well-being is recognized as important and linked to the effectiveness of the judiciary.

The General Council of the Judiciary (CGPJ) takes judicial well-being into account.

The Regulations recognize the right of judges to effective health and safety protection in the exercise of their functions. The CGPJ is responsible for the effective protection of the health and safety of judges.

The CGPJ carries out various activities to promote judicial well-being: development of an Occupational Risk Prevention Plan, creation of an internal Risk Prevention Office, annual medical examinations, various publications on judicial well-being, etc. There is a National Commission on Health and Safety for the Judicial Career (CNSSCJ), made up of representatives of judicial associations, members of the technical bodies of the CCGP, and members of the CGPJ.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

In my opinion, although it is true that efforts are being made to ensure the well-being of judges, much remains to be done in this area.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

In my opinion, judges generally really like their jobs, but they should be able to do it under reasonable conditions that allow for:

-Balancing family life and work, and having free time, which means having a reasonable workload.

-Having a work environment that allows them to adequately perform their duties: adequate office space, IT resources, adequate staff, etc.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

In Spain, a survey has been conducted on the subject which showed that judges generally complained of excessive workloads, the social pressure that they sometimes suffer from, and a lack of free time. This can lead to stress and dissatisfaction

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

In general, people who suffer from stress or psychological disorders develop a certain resistance to recognizing them, which makes it difficult to receive adequate care. There is a certain stigma associated with such problems.

In Spain, the Judicial Ethics Committee has ruled that when a judge consults a psychologist for psychological care related to personal problems, they are not required to inform the General Council of the Judiciary (CGPJ). However, if it affects their work, although there is no legal obligation to do so, it would be appropriate and prudent that the judge to inform the General Council of the Judiciary (CGPJ) so that, with due caution, measures can be adopted to assist the judge and mitigate the negative effects on the proper service to citizens.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

There may be cases that are particularly complex (so-called macro-trials, especially in the criminal field). There are also massive cases that cannot be adequately addressed due to a lack of resources. Such cases exist in all areas of judicial practice. In these cases, judicial stress is likely to increase.

A study conducted by the CGPJ found that the judges most stressed were those “mixed judges” (competent in criminal and civil matters simultaneously), and also, judges that treat with civil, criminal, and gender violence matters.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

In Spain, the judges suffer the greatest workload. As the promotion, in general, is produced by age, judges with a lower age suffer higher stress levels than Magistrates does. It can be added that, precisely, judges with less age have less experience, which can translate into a difficult stress management.

A study carried out by the CGPJ revealed that in courts, stress level is lower than in the tribunals. And, within the courts, the stress is higher in civil and criminal organs than in social and administrative.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

In my opinion, special attention must be dedicated to the workload. Modules should be established that fix what is the workload that a judge can support and, in case of overcoming such limits, support mechanisms should be established.

It is important a good regulation in terms of work day, vacations, etc., which allows the judges to have some free time and reconcile working life with their families.

It also would be positive to facilitate professional assistance that helps the judges to manage situations of stress, anxiety, etc.

And also, to establish training courses on how to handle stress or excess work situations.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

The CGPJ, especially its technical organs, and the CNSSCJ should monitor the health and safety problems of judges. The President of the TSJ and Dean Judges should inform the CGPJ about the problems that affect the safety and health of judges.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

There is a CGPJ web page where information about the subject is contained. Information is also provided through email. Besides, courses are offered on the subject.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

As explained previously, the CGPJ performs various activities in order to promote judicial well-being: elaboration of an occupational risk prevention plan, creation of an internal office for risk prevention, annual medical recognition; publications on judicial well-being, etc. In addition, there is a National Commission for Health and Safety for the Judicial Career (CNSSCJ) of which some representatives of the judicial associations, members of the technical bodies of the CCGP and vowels of the CGPJ are part.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

In my opinion, the basic problem is the lack of resources, which generates an excessive workload. The provision of sufficient media does not depend on the CGPJ, but on the Ministry of Justice and Autonomous Communities.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

Measures have been taken in order to implement Naor's decision. Remission to answer 11.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

As explained before, in my opinion, the main problem is the excessive workload that sometimes have to endure the judges. The solution is difficult, since given the nature of the jurisdictional function, the access of the demands cannot be limited. The CGPJ tries to detect those cases in which the workload of a court is excessive and, subsequently, communicate the problem to the Executive Power, with which it exists a permanent dialogue, but in the end, the decision to provide resources or create more judicial bodies depends on the Autonomous Communities and the Ministry of Justice.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

Training activities have been carried out for the best management of highly complex cases (macrocauses).

When this happens, reinforcement or other measures can be taken, which allow the judicial body to focus its work on the management of the macrocousa, -VGR: Limiting the distribution of new issues to that body, appointing support magistrates, etc. When necessary, the TJS government rooms propose these measures.

There are some studies on how to manage complex judgments cases.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

The management of the health, safety and well-being of judges demands an adequate treatment of several matters: workday, vacation, family conciliation, situations of disability, etc.

Focusing on health, the CGPJ has proposed legislative reforms in order to a greater regulation of the right to health and professional security of the judges: making periodic consultations to the judges on the subject, either by surveys or through the dialogue with the judicial associations; designing training plans on the subject for diffusion among the judges; establishing means of coordination with the Ministry of Justice and the Autonomous Communities; maintaining and updating a risk prevention plan in the judicial career; influencing workload as a risk factor; promoting periodic medical exams; maintaining an alert system that allows a proper detection when there is an excessive workload; promoting preventive training; etc

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

As I have already indicated, the problem is the workload, which makes that, in certain positions, the judges cannot develop their function in an adequate way, which can generate stress, anxiety, etc. That makes very difficult the reconciliation of their work with their family life.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

In my opinion, a greater investment would be necessary and also, to facilitate more resources to the judges in order to perform their function. So, is important that the CGPJ continues working into the lines of action that is already carrying out.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

No, I don't think so. That's all.

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

On a general level questions of providing courts with sufficient resources in order to enable judges and courts to perform their tasks under reasonable circumstances are discussed, but it is never formulated and discussed in the narrow meaning of judicial well-being and never as a contributing factor to the effectiveness.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?
No.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

I think judges experience satisfaction and well-being when delivering well thought and well elaborated judgements in different kind of difficult cases.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

Difficult cases demands well thought and well elaborated judgements, and when judges don't have time to reach that point of knowledge or quality in their work the potential satisfaction turns to stress and dissatisfaction.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

Normally judges are high performing individuals that are used to cope with every challenge. They also experience a feeling of being chosen for a very important task. These features I think propels a reluctance of admitting stress and fear of failure, which becomes a work-culture. Although not a stigma, this might hinder efforts to support judicial well-being because problems are not being formulated or put on the table.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

Any complex case will present a higher risk of judicial stress. For example complex and comprehensive civil cases. Apart from that, also cases concerning sexual crime because of their vast impact on the parties. And to some extent custody cases.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

In my experience young judges experience more stress than senior judges, especially judges under training. This might be explained by the bigger experience of the senior judges – they have had similar cases before – but also because younger judges and judges under training have an ambition to be or to feel approved by their judicial surrounding.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

To try to be satisfied with “good enough” rather than “excellent”. To find strategies on how to get their work structured. To be aware of reasonable workinghours. To learn to say no.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

Courts in Sweden measures on a yearly basis “work-life-balance” among all personel, by asking the individual to give a number on a scale from 1 to 10.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

No.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

Apart from trying to manage the work-load as fair as possible between judges and from time to time hire extra personel, no general response is at hand.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

No.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

No.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

Providing courts with enough resources. Providing for digital support-systems and other support/personel-organisations for the judges. Educating court presidents in the importance of the matter and making them responsible for the workload. Giving opportunity for education.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

In many courts it is an on-going concern how to manage sensitive and highly complex cases, where experiences are gathered and turned in to advise for the future. In many courts judicial personel, including judges, are being offered psychological sessions before or after highly sensitive cases, as for example child pornography cases.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

Lack of awareness among court presidents could be turned into understanding through education.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

It might be among certain persons, but not generally.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

No.

Switzerland / Suisse

1. Oui, il s'agit d'un des critères qui président à la distribution des ressources et des entrées au sein d'un tribunal.
2. Je suis de l'avis qu'actuellement ce n'est pas encore le cas.
3. Le fait de disposer de suffisamment de temps et de ressources pour bien traiter à fond les dossiers (qualité!).
4. Suite à l'augmentation des dossiers à traiter et du fait d'une croissante complexité de ceux-ci la qualité des décisions baisse, ce qui cause du stress et de l'insatisfaction.
5. Le juge est toujours perçu comme un magistrat devant toujours faire face à la pression.
6. Oui, je pense surtout aux affaires de criminalité économique, dont le nombre et la complexité sont croissants.
7. L'expérience est un outil précieux dans le cadre de la gestion du stress.
8. Discussions avec les collègues, partage des soucis avec les organes de direction, sport et temps libre.
9. Non.
10. Non.
11. Discussions internes, partage des ressources et des entrées.
12. Je pense qu'il y a encore une marge de manœuvre. La prise de conscience du problème du stress au sein des tribunaux est toutefois encore récente.
13. Je ne suis malheureusement pas en mesure de répondre.
14. Augmentation des ressources, meilleur partage des entrées.
15. Le choix pour de telles affaires de collaborateurs très expérimentés.
16. Le partage des ressources dépend de la pondération de la difficulté des dossiers, pondération au sujet de laquelle il y a encore une marge d'amélioration.
17. Au niveau individuel, l'on ne peut pas s'augmenter soi-même les ressources à disposition (greffiers rédacteurs, etc.).
18. Au niveau individuel, seule la priorisation des dossiers peut être un outil utile.
19. Non.

Türkiye

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

Judicial well-being is recognised as a significant issue in Türkiye and is regarded as a contributing factor to the judicial effectiveness. Indeed, accordingly, the following strategies and works have been recently initiated and conducted:

Improvement of Physical Facilities: Various strategic steps were taken to improve the working conditions of the judiciary. Many new courthouses were constructed and physical facilities were improved. In this way, it was aimed to provide judges with a more modern and comfortable working environment. To this end, the Ministry of Justice 2024-2028 Strategic Plan had set the target of strengthening the physical infrastructure and increasing the effectiveness of justice services

Pre-Vocational Training and Development: The Personal Development Training Centre within the Justice Academy of Türkiye has a crucial role in supporting the pre-vocational training processes of assistant judges. This centre supports both professional and personal development of members of the judiciary by offering training programmes covering judicial ethics, professional and personal development, as well as opportunities for foreign language training and postgraduate education.

Support for Judges and Prosecutors in the Profession and Development: The Strategic Plan 2024-2028 of the Council of Judges and Prosecutors (CJP) has set the target of providing convenient working environments for members of the judiciary and supporting their professional development in order to strengthen the independence and impartiality of the judiciary. Again in the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Justice 2024-2028, under the title of 'Increasing the Quality and Quantity of Human Resources', it is aimed to support the professional development of judges and improve their working conditions. In the Judicial Reform Strategy for the Century of Türkiye 2025-2029, a set of strategies to increase the well-being of members of the judiciary has been identified with the aim of improving the working conditions of judges in active service.

These comprehensive strategies and works aim to increase both the professional efficacy and personal well-being of the members of the judiciary and contribute to the strengthening of the justice system with a holistic approach.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

Yes. In Türkiye, there exist serious efforts to support and increase the well-being of judges and this issue is treated as an important priority. In particular, the concrete steps set out in the strategic plans of the CJP and the Ministry of Justice as mentioned in the first question,

such as improving physical facilities, increasing pre-vocational and in-service trainings and improving working conditions, are indicative of the importance attached to judicial well-being. Moreover, considering that the Judicial Reform Strategy for the Century of Türkiye includes the reforms aimed at improving the working conditions and well-being of the members of the judiciary, it shows that a sustainable and holistic approach is adopted in this field. All these efforts have the objective of contributing to the professional and personal development of judges and increasing the effectiveness of the judicial system.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

Among the positive characteristics stated the following can be included:

- **Sense of Delivering Justice:** Judges feel moral satisfaction by contributing to the delivery of justice to the society. The fact that their judgements reinforce the sense of justice and trust in the society is an important source of motivation.

- **Professional Independence and Respectability:** The profession of judgeship requires a high level of responsibility that must be carried out in line with the principles of independence and impartiality. This independence contributes to gaining prestige in the eyes of colleagues and society.

- **Continuous Learning and Development Opportunity:** Members of the judiciary have the opportunity to improve themselves in line with the constantly changing and developing legal legislation and case law. The trainings provided by the Justice Academy of Türkiye and the personal development opportunities offered in the direction of the strategic goals of the Ministry of Justice increase the professional satisfaction of judges.

- **Social Contribution and Public Service:** Judges experience the satisfaction of contributing to public service by taking an active role in the protection of the rights and freedoms of society..

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

Among the negative features mentioned the following are included:

- **Heavy Workload and Intensive Working Hours:** Judges, especially in big cities and the courts with a high number of cases, are under time pressure due to the ever-increasing workload.

- **Media and Public Opinion Pressure:** Media and public pressure, especially in the cases closely involving the public opinion, makes it challenging for judges to make decisions and increases their stress levels.

- **Feeling of Loneliness and Isolation:** Since the profession of judgeship requires independent and impartial decision-making, interaction with people outside the judicial service may be limited. This may lead to a feeling of loneliness and isolation in judges.

- **Emotional exhaustion and burnout:** Judges, especially those who work on serious criminal cases or sensitive matters, are at risk of emotional exhaustion and burnout syndrome.

- **Lack of Institutional Support:** Where programmes supporting the professional and personal development of members of the judiciary are inadequate or there are difficulties in accessing existing support services, these issues may also cause dissatisfaction.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

Stigmatization associated with judicial stress and the challenges of judicial work has a considerable negative impact on efforts to promote judicial well-being. This stigma makes it difficult for judges and other members of the judiciary to seek professional support when they experience stress or mental health problems, and can lead them to hide their problems for fear that this will be perceived as a weakness. Therefore, judicial institutions and leaders should encourage open communication on stress and mental health issues, strengthen support mechanisms, and organise training and awareness programmes to reduce the stigma.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

Yes, there are certain types of cases that may pose a risk of judicial stress.

- **Criminal Cases of High Public Interest:** Cases that create a wide impression in the society and are frequently covered in the media create both media and public pressure on judges. In particular, cases such as severe criminal and terrorism cases cause difficulties for judges in their decision-making processes and increase their emotional stress levels.

- **High Value Commercial Cases:** Especially the cases involving large financial sums and complex commercial disputes create both legal and psychological pressure for judges. The intense pressure of the parties and the magnitude of commercial interests create an additional source of stress on judges.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

Yes, there are some contextual factors that may differentially affect the well-being of judges.

- **Seniority and First Class Status:** In Türkiye, the attainment of 'first class' status by judges is based on certain performance criteria. Criteria such as a certain percentage of turnover and the absence of unfavourable evaluation ratings from higher courts and performance reports issued as a result of audits create a certain pressure on judges. Judges who do not yet have first class status may experience more stress in their endeavour to meet these criteria, whereas first class judges may be more comfortable in terms of professional security of tenure and stability.

- **Geographical Location and Workload:** Judges working in the metropolises have to face more intense workload. The high number of cases and the need for conducting fast-trial proceedings increase the level of stress, especially for judges working in metropolises. Judges in rural areas, on the other hand, may have relatively lower levels of workload-related stress as they generally deal with fewer cases.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

For judges, a variety of individual strategies can be effective in managing work-related stress and well-being:

- **Time Management and Planning:** Creating an efficient work schedule by prioritising cases and other tasks can help judges manage their workload in a more balanced way.

- **Physical Activity and Healthy Living:** Regular exercise, spending time outdoors and adopting healthy food habits can reduce stress by promoting both physical and mental health.

- **Hobbies and Social Activities:** Spending time for hobbies that are enjoyed outside of professional life, participating in social activities and spending quality time with family can provide mental relaxation.

- **Receiving Support and Talking:** Sharing experiences especially with colleagues, getting professional psychological support when necessary and attending trainings on coping with stress can be useful.

- **Mindfulness and Meditation Techniques:** Techniques such as mindfulness exercises, breathing exercises and meditation can be effective in reducing anxiety and stress levels.

- **Maintaining Work-Life Balance:** It is especially important to limit work-related activities outside working hours and to use the rights to holiday and leave effectively. As much as possible, it is necessary not to exceed working hours and to respect personal time.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

Yes, Türkiye has institutional mechanisms to measure the level of judicial stress and welfare.

- **Performance Based Monitoring and Evaluation System:** The Judicial Effectiveness Bureau within the CJP closely monitors statistics on judges' workload, case closure rates and overall performance. When low performance is detected, the priority is not to follow the disciplinary procedure, but to identify the cause of the problem. For example, if the problem is that the workload there has increased significantly in a short period of time, the establishment of a new court may be scheduled. If the problem is caused by a chronic health problem of the judge, it is aimed to prevent the backlog of work by appointing a judge with temporary authorization during the treatment period. If the problem is the insufficiency of

physical facilities or auxiliary justice personnel, the Ministry of Justice, the responsible institution, is contacted and the problem is tried to be solved.

- **Determination of Training Needs and Stress Management:** The CJP decides which judges will participate in the training programmes prepared by the Justice Academy of Türkiye. The CJP takes into consideration several factors such as statistics on performance, seniority, grades obtained from the high courts according to the types of cases, and those who took part in the judicial process of the cases that are subject to violation judgements of the ECtHR.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

Yes. In Türkiye, judges receive trainings to maintain their own well-being and manage their stress.

- **Trainings of Justice Academy of Türkiye:** The Academy organizes training programmes especially for assistant judges and prosecutors on “stress management”, “work-private life balance” and “mental health” within Personal Development Training Centre. These trainings support judges in challenges they might encounter in their professional life.
- **In-service Training Programmes:** As it is mentioned in the previous article, the Council of Judges and Prosecutors chooses the judges that will participate in the training programmes organized by the Academy through a multifaceted evaluation. Thus, in line with the training needs identified, efforts are made to provide judges with trainings given by experts.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

In Türkiye, the courts and judges positively respond to the efforts that are outlined below to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being.

- **Improvement of Technological Infrastructure:** The courts in Türkiye accelerated the digitalisation process. The platforms such as electronic litigation system (E-case) and e-signature alleviated the workload of both judges and prosecutors and made it possible to carry out transactions more speedily. These developments helped the courts work more efficiently and thus reduce the stress of the members of the judiciary.
- **Training and Seminars:** As it is mentioned under the previous title, trainings are provided for judges and prosecutors on issues such as stress management, time management and psychological support. While increasing the professional competence of members of the judiciary, such programmes also help them protect their mental health.
- **Improving Working Conditions:** In order to alleviate the workload and to improve working conditions, especially in courts with heavy workload, additional personnel support is provided and in certain areas, steps are taken to modernise courtrooms.
- **Allocation of Workload and Cases:** In order to balance the workload, the courts refer the cases to specific courts according to their type and help distribute the workload.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

Yes, they are sufficient. Significant progress has been made with current measures to support and promote judicial well-being.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

The said Declaration was not yet in question during the preparation process of the 2024-2028 HSK Strategic Plan; therefore, we have not had the opportunity to assess it.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

Judicial institutions and courts might better support the well-being of judges by:

- Providing them with psychological support and stress management programmes that will help them cope with heavy workload, stress and emotional challenges;
- Providing them with trainings and professional development programmes
- Ensuring better working conditions and physical environment;
- Using digital systems and e-case platforms in courts;
- Adopting a supportive and inclusive judiciary culture;
- Making efforts to ensure early establishment of justice;
- Taking steps to operate awarding and appreciation mechanism.

The abovementioned efforts will also contribute to more efficient and effective functioning of justice system.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

In the context of dealing effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases, there are strategies for the well-being of judges.

For example, in Türkiye, within the framework of UYAP system (national judiciary informatics system) used in judiciary, the allocation system is a mechanism that enables the fair allocation of cases received by the courts among judges. The scoring used in the allocation system aims to balance the workload of each judge, to ensure that each judge receives cases in a fair way and to monitor allocation of workload.

Scoring system works as follows: Case Types and Degree of Difficulty: In UYAP allocation system, a score value is assigned for each case type. For example, while more complex and time-consuming cases (e.g. commercial cases and civil cases) are measured with higher scores, cases that are simpler and that can be speedily solved (e.g. petty disputes) are measured with lower scores.

1. **Performance and Experience of Judges:** Scoring can be carried out according to workload and expertise of judges as well. Experienced judges and judges that have expertise in a certain area can be given higher scores in cases of their expertise area. This helps balance workload and expertise.

2. **Fair Allocation:** Thanks to this scoring system, each judge receives assigned cases with a certain score obligation. This establishes a mechanism that ensures that judges are prevented from overburdening and that their workload is balanced.

3. **Allocation System:** The allocation system ensures that cases are allocated among judges according to scores. In this way, the cases are allocated among judges in a fair way and workload in the courts is evenly distributed. Besides, the number and type of cases that each judge receives are measured with a certain score.

4. **Re-arrangement of Scores:** Scores may change depending on the performance of judges. For example, if a judge takes more speedy and efficient decisions, the score load of this judge may be increased, or, the scores of judge that has been assigned to special duties for a certain amount of time may be re-measured.

Moreover, complex and long-term cases may put pressure on judges. For example, increasing the number of judges to be assigned to a certain type of case enables the judges to work more efficiently. Besides, the number of auxiliary staff may be increased for busy cases. In appointment and authorization decrees, The Council of Judge and Prosecutors carry out evaluations taking into consideration the workload and the number of judges in the courts.

In addition, continuing trainings improve knowledge and skills of judges and help judges take more reliable and efficient decisions. In our country, pre-service and in-service training are organised by the Justice Academy of Türkiye. The Council of Judges and Prosecutors gives permissions related to in-service trainings. The Council of Judges and Prosecutors evaluates the performance of judges in complex cases. Moreover, this data is also taken into consideration in promotions. Without doubt, this serves to increase their motivation and well-being.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

In Türkiye, there aren't any problems or challenges concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

No.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

-

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

There is no aspect regarding judicial well-being in our country that has not been addressed.

Ukraine

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

Thus, the well-being of judges in Ukraine, as well as in the entire democratic world, is recognised as an important factor for the functioning of the rule of law and the efficiency of the judicial system of Ukraine. The well-being of judges in Ukraine is realised through: financial support of judges (salaries above the national average), their security (protection, especially during the war), legislative guarantees (independence and social benefits) and reforms (creation of anti-corruption institutions and modernisation of the the High Qualification Commission of Judges of Ukraine and High Council of Judges). The well-being of judges in Ukraine is ensured at all levels, from laws to specific institutions, but further strengthening of international support and adaptation to realities of martial law is needed to ensure a sustainable result.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

In my opinion, significant efforts are currently being made in Ukraine to support the well-being of Ukrainian judges, but this is not enough to fully ensure the stability and independence of the judiciary, especially in times of war and systemic challenges. For justice to function properly in Ukraine, it is necessary to strengthen guarantees of judicial independence, systemic fight against pressure on judges, and adjusting to the realities of martial law.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

In my opinion, the positive features of judicial work that can make Ukrainian judges feel satisfied and happy include the following:

- high social status and prestige of the judicial profession
- security of tenure and absence of a probationary period;
- stable remuneration, which is significantly higher than the average salary in Ukraine;
- independence, which ensures security and freedom of decision-making;
- career development opportunities;
- opportunities for professional development.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

In my opinion, the negative features of judicial work that can cause stress and dissatisfaction among judges include the following:

- excessive workload due to the large number of cases, which results in emotional burnout;
- work during the war in frontline areas;

- criticism from the public and the media due to low trust in judges;
- political or corruption pressure, especially in high-profile cases.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

In my opinion, the stigma associated with the stress and difficulties of judges' work significantly slows down efforts to improve their well-being. Firstly, public distrust of judges due to corruption scandals or inefficiency creates an atmosphere of constant criticism, which makes judges avoid publicity. Secondly, the fear of being perceived as "weak" in the professional environment prevents the implementation of internal support programmes. Thirdly, political pressure and threats, especially in high-profile cases, force judges to work under constant anxiety, which undermines their motivation.

I believe that overcoming stigma requires not only legislative changes, but also systematic work to restore public trust in the judiciary.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

In Ukraine, there are categories of cases that, due to their specific nature, create an increased level of stress for judges. These include:

- war-related cases, as these types of cases are often accompanied by a risk to the life and health of judges, participants in the proceedings, witnesses, constant adjournments of court hearings due to security concerns, and the inability for litigants or witnesses to take part in the hearings due to their serving in the Armed Forces of Ukraine or fleeing the country as refugees;
- corruption and politically sensitive cases, as these cases involve high-ranking officials or oligarchs, and judges face pressure from influential individuals, the media and the public, and judicial decisions may have political consequences;
- criminal cases against organised criminal groups, as judges and their families may receive threats from criminals, which requires constant protection, thus limiting their privacy;
- cases regarding mass protests and riots, as decisions in these cases can trigger large-scale social reactions, and judges are subject to public criticism regardless of the outcome.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

In Ukraine, judges well-being is affected by various contextual factors that shape their experiences and stress levels. These contextual factors include:

- martial law in Ukraine, as judges in the de-occupied regions or those working with cases of internally displaced persons are constantly confronted with traumatic stories, which affects mental health;
- jurisdiction and specialisation, as judges in criminal or administrative courts (especially those dealing with war-related cases) face more emotionally charged cases than, for example, judges in commercial courts; judges of local and appeal courts in frontline areas work in conditions of physical danger, which sharply impairs their well-being compared to their colleagues in peaceful regions;
- seniority and work experience, as those judges who have just started their work often feel pressure due to lack of practice, fear of mistakes and distrust of colleagues, which increases stress, while more experienced judges, on the contrary, may suffer from professional burnout due

to years of hard work;

- the location of courts, as judges in large cities have access to better technical facilities and training programmes but face a higher workload and public criticism, while rural areas lack resources for judicial security during case hearings;

- gender and age aspects, as female judges often face stereotypes of being too "lenient" or having a double workload at work and at home, and older judges may have difficulty adapting to digitalisation or reforms, which can lead to feelings of inferiority.

I believe that the different impact of factors on judges' well-being is due to the specifics of the working environment (working in frontline regions and other safer areas), individual characteristics (experienced judges are better able to adapt to stress, while younger judges are better able to adapt to technology), and systemic imbalances (availability of resources, regional risks). The context of war, corruption, or lack of support exacerbate these differences, creating inequalities in workload.

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

In my opinion, judges can manage stress through personal strategies such as physical activity (e.g. sports or walks), psychological meditation practices, work-life balance (devoting time to family, favourite hobbies), social support (talking to colleagues or a psychologist), workload planning and stress management training. Systematic application of these approaches helps to maintain emotional stability and prevent burnout.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

In Ukraine, systematic monitoring of judges' stress and well-being is not a centralised practice and is still mainly carried out through individual initiatives. NGOs sometimes conduct anonymous surveys among judges on working conditions and psychological stress. The Council of Judges of Ukraine calculates the judicial workload ratio. The State Judicial Administration of Ukraine periodically conducts anonymous surveys among judges, collecting data on working conditions, stress and professional needs. The High Council of Justice formally has mechanisms for collecting complaints about pressure or threats to judges, but this does not include regular stress assessments.

I believe that effective measurement and monitoring of judges' stress and well-being requires state instruments, such as anonymous annual surveys, integration of well-being issues into the evaluation of the work of courts, and training of specialised social services.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

The National School of Judges includes elements of stress and emotional resilience training in its judicial training programmes, especially after 2022 due to the impact of the war in Ukraine. The National School of Judges also periodically conducts training sessions for judges to deepen their knowledge of the peculiarities of stressful and traumatic situations, their impact on the human psyche; and to develop skills in psychological support and rehabilitation.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

The Ukrainian judiciary does rely on external initiatives to support judicial well-being. For example, CoE and OSCE projects fund stress management training, webinars on psychological resilience, and develop tools for analysing judges' workload. Some NGOs in Ukraine conduct anonymous surveys to identify key sources of stress. However, I believe that all these efforts are not systematic, as there are no unified standards in this area at the state level.

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

In my opinion, the current measures to support and promote the well-being of judges in Ukraine are insufficient due to their fragmentation and lack of systematicity. Mental health, safety and workload balance issues are not always taken into account at the institutional level. The reluctance of judges to seek psychological help due to possible judgement among colleagues, lack of anonymous services and mandatory support standards exacerbate the problem. I believe that real change requires a comprehensive programme that includes regular stress monitoring, mandatory training, guaranteed access to psychologists, and legislative provisions for judges' workload and safety.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

There is no information that Ukraine has taken measures or is considering taking measures to implement the Nauru Declaration on the well-being of Judges.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

In my opinion, judicial institutions and courts could better support the well-being of judges in Ukraine as a means of ensuring the proper functioning of the judicial system through **systemic changes**, namely: the creation of specialised psychological services, optimisation of judges' workload, guarantees of social protection (insurance, security, salaries), and the introduction of state standards for medical examinations and workload norms. I believe that these steps can ensure stable working conditions, reduce stress and increase trust in the judicial system of Ukraine.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

Currently, Ukraine has not yet developed systemic strategies for judges' well-being, in particular for dealing with sensitive or complex cases.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

As noted in the previous response, Ukraine has not yet developed strategies for judicial well-being at either the institutional or judicial level.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

In Ukraine, there are challenges related to the development and implementation of judicial well-being strategies at the individual level. I believe that the obstacle is primarily the excessive workload on judges, especially in times of war, which results in a lack of time to consciously and systematically take care of their psycho-emotional state

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

In my opinion, there are affordable and practical solutions to overcome these problems at the individual level, namely: increasing stress resistance by applying stress management techniques, as well as by taking stress management courses; automating routine tasks. I believe that these steps are not costly, but can help judges manage their workload more effectively, integrate self-care into their workflow, and reduce the risk of burnout by making well-being part of their professional practice.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?

There are no other comments on the well-being of the judiciary.

I. Recognising the importance of judicial well-being and acknowledging its impact on the effectiveness of judiciaries

1. Is judicial well-being recognised as an important issue and a contributing factor to the effectiveness of the judiciary in your country? If so, how is this done and at what level?

Yes. In February 2021, the first Judicial Health and Wellbeing Strategy was launched, a four-year plan covering 2021 to 2025 consisting of six core objectives; these are: • promoting the judicial welfare offer; • centralising welfare information and having a visible and clear route for access to services; • raising awareness of the importance of mental wellbeing; • building an inclusive culture across the judiciary; • prevention: actions to support the judiciary to stay healthy and sitting; • intervention: actions to support judicial office holders during periods of sickness absence.

In addition, there is an annual Judicial Attitude Survey examining such topics as working conditions, pay and pensions, wellbeing, stress, security, respect, bullying and discrimination etc. This is a national survey conducted on behalf of the Lady Chief Justice and the Senior President of Tribunals. There is, in addition, a Well-Being Action Plan published in 2022.

2. Do you think enough is being done to support and promote the well-being of judges in your country given its implications for the good functioning of the judiciary?

See above.

II. Experiences of judicial stress and well-being

3. In your opinion, what are the positive features of judicial work, from which judges might experience satisfaction and well-being?

The possibility of contributing to the development of the law; the just and impartial resolution of disputes; the variety of work; the intellectual challenge.

4. In your opinion, what are the negative features of judicial work, from which judges might experience stress and dissatisfaction?

Some judges find it stressful to decide disputed questions. Some judges experience poor working conditions and a lack of administrative and IT support. Public criticism of decisions taken by judges can also have a negative impact.

5. To what extent, in your opinion, is stigma around judicial stress and work challenges hindering efforts to support judicial well-being?

One of the key features of the judicial Well-being Action Plan is to eliminate any sense of stigma. Support services are available (Maximus Mental Health Support Service) and judges with specific responsibility for judicial welfare are appointed.

6. Are there certain case types (e.g. areas of legal practice where cases are sensitive and with a high degree of complexity) which might present a higher risk of judicial stress? If so, please provide details of the case types that might be considered a higher risk and why?

Criminal cases involving sexual exploitation (especially of children) or extreme violence present a higher risk of judicial stress. So do bitter family disputes and “end of life” cases. A specialised counselling service is available for judges who might be impacted in this way.

7. Are there any other contextual factors that might impact judges differently as regards their well-being (e.g. jurisdiction, seniority or experience)? If so, why in your opinion might these factors have differential effects in practice?

Judges exercising jurisdiction in crime, immigration or in family matters are more likely to suffer from stress. Senior judges, sitting in appeal courts, are less likely to suffer from stress. Coroners report a high level of stress. The most frequently cited stress factors are judges’ lack of personal time due to judicial workload (58%) and difficulties achieving a reasonable work-life balance (53%). Other prevalent factors involve core judicial functions: managing trials (41%) and evidence judges have to deal with (35%). Two other factors are much more recent technology-based stress factors: amount of screen time for judicial work (49%) and dealing with online technology for their work (39%).

III. Existing measures to support and promote judicial well-being

8. In your opinion, what personal strategies might help judges to manage their own stress and well-being arising from work?

Not qualified to answer. But the judicial intranet contains material on managing anxiety and stress; building resilience etc.

9. Do judicial institutions in your country currently measure and monitor levels of judicial stress and well-being? If so, please provide details of what this entails and how frequently levels are monitored.

Yes. This is done through the annual Judicial Attitudes Survey mentioned above.

10. Do individual judges receive training on how they can maintain their well-being? If so, please furnish details of this training and at what stage it is provided.

I am not aware of formal training being provided, except that all judges are required to attend a course in inclusion training. But there is published guidance and a stress support tool available to judges. There is also an eLearning product called Managing Stress and Building Resilience. This is published by the Judicial College.

11. In what ways are the courts in your country responding to efforts to alleviate judicial stress and support judicial well-being?

There is a confidential Judicial Helpline. This is a confidential telephone line available to all Judicial Office Holders (JOHs) and provides access to psychological and emotional support 24 hours a day, every day of the year. In addition, as mentioned judges have access to support services; and welfare judges are appointed. There is also counselling available for

judges who have been involved in a critical incident (e.g. being assaulted) and trial support for judges involved in high profile or traumatic cases, likely to be scrutinised by the press. The judiciary also publishes policies on such topics as compassionate leave, support for judges suffering from terminal illness. This is in addition to the annual survey mentioned above. The latest Judicial Attitudes Survey, however, reports that these facilities are little used, and that judges suffering from stress tend to talk to their leadership judges instead

12. In your opinion, are current measures to support and promote judicial well-being in your country sufficient?

Yes, although there is always room for more.

13. Has your country taken steps, or is considering taking steps, to implement the Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being? If so, please provide details of the steps taken or the steps that are being considered.

The UK was one of the sponsors of the Nauru Declaration. The steps outlined above are designed to implement the declaration.

IV. Looking ahead: potential solutions and challenges

14. How might judicial institutions and courts better support the well-being of judges in your country as a means to ensure the good functioning of the judiciary?

Improvement of working conditions (e.g. repair and refurbishment of court houses many of which are in very poor physical condition); improvements in IT support; encouragement of collegial activities. Steps are also being taken to improve courtroom security following several attacks on judges within the courtroom.

15. Have strategies been elaborated on the well-being of judges, for instance in the context of how to deal effectively with sensitive and highly complex cases?

Yes. See above.

16. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the institutional and court level? If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these institutional and organisational challenges?

Lack of funding is the main obstacle. In addition judges' safety is compromised by unfair and negative press reporting as well as online abuse.

17. Are there any problems or challenges in your country concerning the development and implementation of such strategies at the individual level?

See above.

18. If so, what kind of solutions can you suggest for overcoming these individual-level challenges?

A task force has been set up to review security of judges.

19. Are there any further comments you wish to make regarding judicial well-being in your country which have not been covered above?