



Strasbourg, 12 February 2024

CEPEJ-GT-EVAL(2024)3

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR THE EFFICIENCY OF JUSTICE  
(CEPEJ)**

**WORKING GROUP ON THE EVALUATION OF JUDICIAL SYSTEMS  
(CEPEJ-GT-EVAL)**

**46<sup>th</sup> meeting**  
**7 and 8 February 2024**

**MEETING REPORT**

Document prepared by the Secretariat

Directorate General I - Human Rights and the Rule of Law

## **I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

1. The Working Group on the Evaluation of Judicial Systems (CEPEJ-GT-EVAL) of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) held its 46<sup>th</sup> meeting on 7 and 8 February 2024, in Strasbourg, under the chairmanship of Jaša Vrabec (Slovenia).
2. The agenda and the list of participants of the meeting can be found respectively in Annexes I and II to this Report.

## **II. DESIGNATION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE CEPEJ-GT-EVAL**

3. The Working Group unanimously designates Jaša Vrabec (Slovenia) as Chairman of the Group for the next term 2024-2025.

## **III. INFORMATION BY THE MEMBERS OF THE WORKING GROUP AND THE SECRETARIAT**

4. The Secretariat informs the members of the new mandate of the Working Group adopted by the CEPEJ last December.
5. It also informs on the work carried out since its last meeting in October 2023 and in particular on the activities aiming at strengthening the support to the CEPEJ national correspondents : la publication of the summary of the workshops held at the occasion of the last national correspondents meeting and the posting of videos of testimonies online of national correspondents on the dedicated page of the CEPEJ website. A summary of the evaluation survey of the CEPEJ's Evaluation Report on European Judicial Systems, which was sent to the CEPEJ members and national correspondents in June 2023, has also been published.
6. The Secretariat is also working on the “welcome package” and the list of tasks dedicated to the national correspondents, which were discussed at the last meeting. A task force composed of Joanne Battistino (Malta) and Seçkin Koçer (Türkiye) has been set up to finalise these documents.

## **IV. 2024 EVALUATION CYCLE (2022 DATA)**

### *a. Status and issues of data collection and quality control*

7. The CEPEJ Secretariat informs the Working Group on the progress of the data collection process and the quality control of the data already provided by the national correspondents. The questionnaire was opened last March and the foreseen deadline for the data collection was 1<sup>st</sup> of October. To date, 44 member States (with the exception of Liechtenstein and San Marino) and two observer States (Israel and Morocco) are taking part in this evaluation cycle.
8. Problems relating to quality control have also been mentioned, in particular the difficulty of harmonising data on prosecutors' case flows.
9. The Group discusses ways of improving collection timeframes and the involvement of states, in particular by making national authorities aware of the importance of both - the process and the result.

### *b. Structure of the Report*

10. The Group agrees on a new title of the **first part of the next edition of the Evaluation Report** on Judicial Systems, replacing "Tables, graphs and analyses" with "General analyses", which would consist of 6 chapters:

- evaluation process of CEPEJ
- budgets
- justice professionals
- access to justice
- efficiency and quality
- information and communication technology (ICT).

11. Concerning the content of each chapter, the Group decides that:

- Chapter 2 (Budgets) will focus on financial data relating to judicial systems (courts, prosecution services, legal aid). Developments concerning legal aid organisation (including on the basis of the new questions in this cycle) as well as court fees and taxes will be discussed in the new chapter 4 (Access to justice);
- Chapter 3 (Professionals) will contain the same elements as in the previous Report edition, enriched with data from the new questions introduced for the current cycle. Certain developments concerning lawyers could be transferred to chapter 4 (Access to justice);
- Chapter 4 (Access to justice) is a new chapter which will contain some of the data previously covered in the chapter on courts and court users. Legal aid (former chapter 2 and new questions) will be dealt with. Links should be made with issues concerning ICT and possibly mediation. The structure of this new chapter will have to be completely rethought.
- Chapter 5 (Efficiency) should have the same content and possibly be enriched, provided the data allow it, with more in-depth information on mediation, second and third instance. The Working Group also suggests that the structure of the report should be harmonized and that emphasis should be placed on the performance indicators.;
- Chapter 6 (ICT) will henceforth include developments concerning the deployment rate and the usage rate of ICT tools, in accordance with the new index created based on the questions of this cycle.

12. In general, the Group deems that more certain aspects should be dealt with transversally, in the various chapters of the Report, in particular ICT, which may concern not only the dedicated chapter but also the chapter on access to justice.

13. The CEPEJ-GT-EVAL suggests adding a short summary of the different conclusions at the beginning of the Report. It would also like links to be added to the Report to the other tools developed by the CEPEJ.

14. As regards the country profiles (**second part of the report**), it was agreed that they should be presented on four pages in order to improve their readability. Some indicators could be modified (in particular the ICT indicator) and others added, such as an indicator on training of judges and prosecutors or an indicator on incoming cases.

15. In respect of CEPEJ-STAT (**third part of the report**), it was decided to improve navigation for users. The ICT dashboard will be reviewed in the light of the new developments and indexes (deployment and usage rates).

c. *Timetable of the Report*

16. The data collected and reviewed by the Secretariat ("quality control" or "quality check") will be stabilised at the end of February so that they can be sent to the experts in charge of the report drafting by 1 March 2024 at the latest. The data will be accompanied by comments from the national

correspondents and statistical material prepared by the Secretariat. The final versions of the draft chapters should be sent to the Secretariat at the beginning of May. The Secretariat will revise these draft chapters as necessary and prepare the country profiles so that the draft Report can be presented to the next plenary meeting of the CEPEJ (18 and 19 June 2024), with a view to its adoption

17. The Working Group considers that the draft Report should also be communicated to the CEPEJ national correspondents so that they can make their possible comments to the CEPEJ members before the plenary meeting.
18. The Secretariat reiterates the need to stabilise the data used for standardisation (population, GDP) at an earlier stage, and by 1 June at the latest.

*d. Experts in charge of drafting the report and supervision of the preparation of the report*

19. During the second day of this meeting, an online session was organized to meet the different experts selected for the preparation of the different chapters: Vladimir Pavlovic (chapter 2), Nicolas Garcette (chapter 3), Helen Burrows (chapter 4), Ana Krnic Kulusic (chapter 5) and Marco Velicogna (chapter 6). The CEPEJ's work on the evaluation of judicial systems, the methodology and the expectations for the preparation of the next report were presented to them. Other specific meetings will take place in the coming weeks on each chapter.
20. The members of the Working Group share responsibility for supervising the preparation of the different chapters of the first part of the Report, as they had done for the previous two cycles.

*e. Peer review to support data collection*

21. The Secretariat mentions various contacts made at this stage with the authorities of certain states with a view to proposing to organise peer reviews.
22. Christophe Koller indicated that Switzerland could be a candidate for such an evaluation in 2025.

## **V. COOPERATION WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

*a. Study for the European Commission on the functioning of judicial systems in the member States of the European Union (Justice Scoreboard) and cooperation with Eurostat*

23. The CEPEJ study prepared for the EU Justice Scoreboard, based on 2022 data, was submitted to the European Commission in mid-January 2024. This study consists of a first part containing comparative tables and comments and a second part of country profiles.
24. The Secretariat informs the Working Group that an amendment to the contract with the European Commission was signed in December 2023 with a view to the transmission of certain data collected by the CEPEJ in the framework of the EU Justice Scoreboard (relating to case flow) for publication by Eurostat. It welcomes this recognition of the quality of the CEPEJ's data by the European Union.

*b. Dashboard Western Balkans and Dashboard Eastern Partnership countries*

25. The Secretariat informs the Group about the harmonisation efforts from this cycle onwards (based on 2023 data) between the two Dashboards, which now use the same questionnaire, the same structure of comparative sections and country profiles, the same reference year and the same timetables.

26. Concerning the Dashboard Western Balkans, a regional workshop on common issues and good practices in case flow management and efficiency of court proceedings was held in Budapest in November 2023. The results of this workshop are published on the CEPEJ website.

**VI. Next meetings of the CEPEJ-GT-EVAL and CEPEJ national correspondents**

27. The next meeting of the Working Group will be held in Strasbourg (to be confirmed) on 17 and 18 October 2024 and will be preceded by the meeting of the CEPEJ national correspondents on 16 October.

## Annex I

### Agenda of the meeting

1.	Adoption of the agenda	
2.	Information by the members of the Working Group and the Secretariat	
3.	Appointment of the President of the CEPEJ-GT-EVAL	<b>Reference document</b>  <a href="#">Working Group Terms of reference</a>
<b>Preparation of the 2024 evaluation cycle (2022 data)</b>		
	f. Status of collected data	
	g. Structure of the report	<b>Working document</b>
	h. Timetable of the report	
	i. Experts in charge of drafting the report	Proposed changes to the Evaluation report - cycle 2024 (2022 data) CEPEJ-GT-EVAL(2024)1
	<i>The following experts will be online on February 8 (morning): Vladimir Pavlovic, Nicolas Garcette, Helen Burrows, Ana Krnic Kulusic, Marco Velicogna</i>	
4.	j. Supervision of the chapters	<b>Reference document</b>  Evaluation Report on Judicial Systems – 2022 cycle (2020 data) <a href="#">Part 1</a> and <a href="#">Part 2</a>
	k. Peer review and support to data collection	Evaluation Scheme for European judicial systems - 2024 cycle <a href="#">CEPEJ(2022)9rev1</a>
	<b>Cooperation with the European Commission</b>	Explanatory note to the evaluation grid - cycle 2024 <a href="#">CEPEJ(2023)2</a>
	a. Study for the European Commission on the functioning of judicial systems in the Member States of the European Union (Justice Scoreboard)	
5.	b. Cooperation with European Commission/Eurostat	
	c. Dashboard Western Balkans	
	d. Dashboard Eastern Partnership countries	
6.	Next meetings of the working group and CEPEJ National Correspondents	<b>Reference document</b>  Summary of the workshops (National correspondents meeting in 2023)

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[CEPEJ-GT-EVAL\(2023\)12](#)

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**7. Any other business**

Report of the 45th meeting of the  
CEPEJ-GT-EVAL  
[CEPEJ-GT-EVAL\(2023\)11](#)

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**List of participants / Liste de participants****MEMBERS**

<b>CROATIA / CROATIE</b>	<b>Martina VRDOLJAK</b> Head of department for statistics, analytic and strategic development of Judiciary, Directorate for organisation of Judiciary, Ministry of justice <b>Online</b>
<b>GERMANY / ALLEMAGNE</b>	<b>Simone KREß</b> Judge, Vice-President of the Tribunal in Cologne
<b>MALTA / MALTE</b>	<b>Joanne BATTISTINO</b> Senior Manager, Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, The Law Courts
<b>SLOVENIA / SLOVENIE</b>	<b>Jaša VRABEC</b> Head of the Office for Public Relations Supreme Court
<b>GREECE / GRECE</b>	<b>Victoria MERTIKOPOULOU</b> Advisor, EU & Competition, Regulatory, Compliance, Kyriakides Georgopoulos Law Firm <b>Online</b>
<b>TÜRKİYE / TÜRKİYE</b>	<b>Seçkin KOÇER</b> Judge and Head of Department, General Directorate for Strategy Development, Ministry of Justice

**PRESIDENT OF THE CEPEJ**

<b>MALTA / MALTE</b>	<b>Francesco DEPASQUALE</b> The Honourable Mr Justice, Superior Courts, Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs <b>Apologised</b>
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**SCIENTIFIC EXPERTS**

<b>SWITZERLANDS / SUISSE</b>	<b>Christophe KOLLER</b> Researcher, Director ESEHA, Centre for counselling and comparative analysis
<b>FRANCE / FRANCE</b>	<b>Claire STRUGALA</b> Project manager, General Secretariat of the Ministry of Justice, CEPEJ national correspondent <b>Online</b>

**PARTICIPANTS**

<b>EUROPEAN EXPERTISE AND EXPERT INSTITUTE / INSTITUT EUROPEEN DE L'EXPERTISE ET DE L'EXPERT (EEEI)</b>	<b>Benoit De Clerck</b> Co-président de l'EEEI <b>Apologised</b>
<b>EUROPEAN UNION OF RECHTSPFLEGER AND COURT CLERKS / UNION EUROPÉENNE DES GREFFIERS DE JUSTICE (EUR)</b>	<b>Jean-Jacques KUSTER</b> , Président honoraire <b>Apologised</b>
<b>INTERNATIONAL UNION OF BAILIFFS / UNION INTERNATIONALE DES HUISSIERS DE JUSTICE ET OFFICIERS JUDICIAIRES (UIHJ)</b>	<b>Mathieu Chardon</b> Secretary-General, Judicial Officer <b>Apologised</b>



## SECRETARIAT

### Department for Human Rights, Justice and Legal Co-operation standard-setting activities

<b>Daniele CANGEMI</b> Head of Department, Department for Human Rights, Justice and Legal Co-operation standard-setting activities, Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law – DGI
<b>Christel SCHURRER</b> Secretary of the CEPEJ-GT-EVAL
<b>Lidija NAUMOVSKA</b> Statistic coordinator
<b>Milan NIKOLIC</b> Administrator
<b>Guergana LAZAROVA-DECHAUX</b> Administrator
<b>Sabina STANCU</b> Legal officer
<b>Federica VIAPIANA</b> Project manager (Dashboard Western Balkans)
<b>Daniela ZOL</b> Statistician (Dashboard Western Balkans)
<b>Enes SEHIC</b> Project manager (Dashboard Western Balkans) <b>Online</b>
<b>Lejla BEGOVIC</b> Project Assistant (Dashboard Western Balkans) <b>Online</b>
<b>Oxana GUTU</b> Project manager (Dashboard Eastern Partnership) <b>Online</b>
<b>Tony VILELA</b> Statistician (Dashboard Eastern Partnership)
<b>Bakar JIKIA</b> Project manager (Dashboard Eastern Partnership) <b>Online</b>
<b>Tamar KATSITADZE</b> Project Assistant (Dashboard Eastern Partnership) <b>Online</b>
<b>Sandrine LUTZ</b> CEPEJ assistant
<b>Lucille SPIELMANN</b> CEPEJ intern