

Newsletter| N° 6: January - June 2025

LEGAL CO-OPERATION (CDCJ, CCJE, CCPE) IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2025

## IN CONVERSATION WITH...

### ...ANTONIO VERCHER NOGUERA, PRESIDENT OF THE CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL OF EUROPEAN PROSECUTORS (CCPE)

Mr Antonio Vercher Noguera (Spain) is the current President of the CCPE. He has actively contributed through the years in developing CCPE Opinions and standards, but also advocated and promoted them tirelessly throughout Europe and beyond. Mr Vercher Noguera is the Chief Prosecutor of Spain for Environment and Urban Planning, with the rank of Deputy Prosecutor General. We asked him to share his views about the CCPE.



*Antonio Vercher Noguera (Spain) - President of the CCPE since 1 January 2025*

#### **1. What is the CCPE?**

*The CCPE is a unique body, comprised only of serving prosecutors from all Council of Europe member states, acting in their individual capacity. In this way, the CCPE gives the perspective of prosecutors throughout Europe. It focuses on issues that matter to prosecutors in their work and aims to help ensure that prosecutors can work independently, impartially and effectively when fulfilling their important responsibilities within the national legal systems.*

*We all agree that prosecutors play a significant role in society. They uphold, through their actions, the fairness and impartiality of justice and ultimately the rule of law. The CCPE has on occasion been referred to as the “prosecutorial arm” of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, in that it is through the CCPE that the best examples of*

good practice are assembled, analysed and transformed into standards and guidance which the Committee of Ministers transmits to all member states in order to reinforce the status of prosecutors and their independent, impartial and effective work throughout Europe.

## **2. What is the CCPE currently working on?**

To date, the CCPE has already adopted 19 thematic opinions which cover the most essential aspects of the prosecutorial profession, and support the work not only of prosecutors, but also more generally policy and decision makers.

In 2025, the CCPE is working - in what will be its Opinion No. 20 (2025) - on diversity and inclusivity within prosecution services, gaining an insight into how such diversity and inclusivity may have an important common added value for the delivery of fair and impartial justice. The need for a focus on diversity and inclusivity flows from both the complex fabric of today's societies and the benefits to be gained from reflecting this situation in the composition of prosecution services, as for any public entity. A variety of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives among prosecutors is beneficial to their decision-making process and also has the potential of increasing public confidence in the justice system.

It is also working this year on a thematic study on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the work of prosecution services. This thematic study echoes the recently adopted Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law. This thematic study will in fact serve as a groundwork for developing the relevant standards in a future CCPE Opinion, by exploring relevant legislation, rules and guidelines in member states as regards the use of AI in the work of prosecution services and describing the current state of play in this field.

## **3. The Council of Europe places the environment as one of its priority actions. What is the role of prosecutors in this area?**

I am glad to answer this question because, having specialised in the course of my work on environmental matters, I naturally was a strong supporter of the work of the CCPE on Opinion No. 17 (2022) on the role of prosecutors in the protection of the environment.

Estimates of illicit proceeds from environmental crimes, including illegal trade in wildlife products, indicate that environmental crimes are among the most profitable crimes in the world, with often long-lasting or even irreversible effects impacting future generations.

Opinion No. 17 (2022) of the CCPE echoes the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)20 on human rights and the protection of the environment, adopted contemporaneously, and remains more relevant than ever after the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe Strategy on the Environment on 14 May 2025.

The Opinion acknowledges the complexity of environmental crimes, which can be multifaceted and linked to other major criminal activities, and the challenges faced by prosecutors in dealing with them. Therefore, it draws on the practical experience in this field from prosecutors across Europe so as to provide useful guidance that factors in differences between justice systems. Taking a step back, this opinion epitomises the

*strength of the approach followed by the CCPE in its opinions which allows it to bring together standards steeped in practice that make a difference in the work of prosecutors across Europe.*

## LEGAL CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES



### Protection of Lawyers

The [Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer](#), which was prepared by the CDCJ and its [Committee of Experts for the Protection of Lawyers \(CJ-AV\)](#), was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 12 March 2025. It was opened for signature on 13 May 2025 in Luxembourg at the 134th session of the Committee of Ministers. To date, it has already been signed by 18 member states. The convention aims to protect lawyers and bar associations in the light of increased attacks and interference with the free practise of the profession. Lawyers are essential to guarantee access to justice for all.

[Read more >](#)

### Rights of the child in care proceedings

On 28 May 2025, the Committee of Ministers adopted two Recommendations to strengthen the protection of the rights and best interests of the child [in parental separation proceedings](#) and [in care proceedings](#). Both were prepared jointly by the CDCJ and the [Steering Committee of the Rights of the Child \(CDENF\)](#) and their joint expert committee ([CJ/ENF-ISE](#)). Practical implementation tools for policy makers were also prepared to assist them in the designing of policies in the areas of parental separation and care proceedings.

[Read more >](#)



### Access of donor-conceived persons to their origins

On 3-5 June 2025, the [Committee of Experts on Access to Origins \(CJ-OR\)](#) held its first meeting in Strasbourg. The committee has been tasked - under the guidance and supervision of the CDCJ - to draft a recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the rights of donor-conceived persons to know their origins. On this occasion, it heard different stakeholders (donor-conceived persons, a parent representing the association of patients and ex-patients of Medically Assisted Reproduction (MAR), a donor and civil society organisations).

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### Stateless children

The CDCJ published a [Feasibility study on a non-binding legal instrument on stateless children's access to nationality](#) in February 2025. The [Limited Working group of the CDCJ on migration \(CDCJ-MIG\)](#) held its third meeting on access to nationality for stateless children on 23-25 April 2025. During its meeting, it examined a preliminary draft revised [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2009\)13](#) on the nationality of children and the draft compendium of good practice on access to nationality for stateless children.

[Read more >](#)



### Information on foreign law



### Strengthening judicial independence and impartiality

A webpage aiming to facilitate the implementation of the [European Convention on Foreign Law \(ETS No.62\)](#) and its [Additional Protocol \(ETS No. 97\)](#) was launched in January 2025. These instruments are meant to provide mechanisms whereby information on foreign law can be obtained by a state party from another state party when this is made necessary to resolve disputes. The webpage contains a number of practical tools (handbook, standard forms, videos, FAQ rubric).

[Read more >](#)

The CDCJ has pursued its work on the follow-up to the Council of Europe Action Plan on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality (Sofia Action Plan) with the preparation of the Thematic Review focused on the career and training of judges. For the purposes of this report, it prepared a questionnaire addressed to both the CDCJ and the [Consultative Council of European Judges \(CCJE\)](#) and whose replies will allow to have clear idea of the state of play across Europe before deciding on future action.

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## ABOUT JUDGES AND PROSECUTORS



*Ms Leonie Reynolds (Ireland), CCJE President, 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025*

### **CCJE Opinion on judicial well-being**

This year, the [Consultative Council of European Judges \(CCJE\)](#) is preparing an opinion on the importance of judicial well-being for the delivery of justice and the rule of law. It will



*The CCPE Working Group met in Strasbourg on 22-23 May 2025 to discuss draft Opinion No. 20 (2025) on diversity and inclusivity within prosecution services*

### **CCPE Opinion on diversity and inclusivity in prosecutions services**

In 2025, the [Consultative Council of European Prosecutors \(CCPE\)](#) is working on an opinion highlighting the

underline how judicial well-being is relevant factor for the effective functioning of justice systems. It builds on the situation in Europe based on the replies to a questionnaire addressed to CCJE members and, among others, on the Declaration on Judicial Well-Being (Nauru Declaration) adopted at a Regional Judicial Conference organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 26 July 2024.

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benefits of promoting diversity and inclusivity in the composition of prosecutions services for their decision-making process and further strengthening trust of the public.

In addition, the CCPE is preparing a thematic study on the use of artificial intelligence (AI).

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## RECENT EVENTS

- [First Inter-Regional Network Lab of the Global Alliance to End Statelessness \(20 May 2025\)](#)
- [Conference “\*\*Protecting Lawyers, preserving access to Justice\*\*”, to mark the adoption and opening for signature of the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer \(16 June 2025\)](#)
- [Side-event “\*\*Protecting lawyers to ensure access to justice – The New Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer\*\*”, UN HCR 59th session \(27 June 2025\)](#)

# PUBLICATIONS

**Feasibility study on a non-binding legal instrument regarding stateless children's access to nationality**



[www.coe.int/cdcj](http://www.coe.int/cdcj)



**Practical guide on the mechanism of the European convention on information on foreign law (ETS No. 62) and its additional protocol (ETS No. 97)**



[www.coe.int/cdcj](http://www.coe.int/cdcj)



Feasibility study on a non-binding legal instrument regarding stateless children's access to nationality

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Practical guide on the mechanism of the European convention on information on foreign law (ETS No. 62) and its additional protocol (ETS No. 97)

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**THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION  
OF THE PROFESSION OF LAWYER**



[www.coe.int/cdcj](http://www.coe.int/cdcj)




**ADMINISTRATIVE  
DETENTION  
OF MIGRANTS  
AND ASYLUM  
SEEKERS**

[Guide for practitioners](#)



Leaflet Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer

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Administrative detention of migrants and asylum seekers – Guide for practitioners

New translations available in [Armenian](#), [Italian](#) and [Spanish](#).

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### Have your say

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