

Strasbourg, 6 December 2024

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## **CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL OF EUROPEAN JUDGES (CCJE)**

**25<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting**

**4 - 6 December 2024**

**Room 11, Main Building (Palais)**

**Strasbourg**

### **ABRIDGED MEETING REPORT**

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#### **A. FOREWORD**

1. The Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE) held its 25<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting on 4-6 December 2024 in Strasbourg. It was chaired by Ms Leonie Reynolds (Ireland), President of the CCJE. The agenda is appended to the present report.
2. Mr Gianluca Esposito, Director General of Human Rights and Rule of Law of the Council of Europe, greeted the participants and delivered opening remarks underlining that the CCJE Opinions build on the practical experience of judges across Europe, bringing real added value to the work of the CCJE.

#### **B. ITEMS SUBMITTED TO THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS FOR DECISION**

3. The CCJE invited the Committee of Ministers:
  - a. to take note of Opinion No. 27 (2024) on the disciplinary liability of judges which will be forwarded to the competent authorities in the member states while encouraging

its translation into appropriate languages if need be, and to the relevant bodies of the Council of Europe, so that they can take account of it in their own work;

b. to take note of this report as a whole.

## C. LIST OF ITEMS DISCUSSED AND DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE CCJE

The CCJE

4. **adopted** its Opinion No. 27 (2024) on the disciplinary liability of judges subject to possible editorial amendments by its Bureau, which was entrusted with making any such amendments, if needed, and also ensuring consistency between the English and French versions;
5. **decided** to submit it to the Committee of Ministers for it to take note of it and to invite member states to ensure its dissemination as widely as possible among decision-makers and professionals of justice, including through its translation where needed;
6. **adopted** the thematic study on diversity and inclusivity in the judiciary, subject to possible editorial amendments by the Secretariat, which was entrusted with making any such amendments, if needed, and also ensuring consistency between the English and French versions;
7. **welcomed** the 2024 Annual Report of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe entitled “Our Rights, Our Future” where the relevance of the CCJE’s work, in particular Opinion No. 25 (2022) on freedom of expression of judges and Opinion No. 26 (2023) entitled “Moving forward: the use of assistive technology in the judiciary” were emphasised;
8. **took note** of the information provided by the Ms Leonie Reynolds (Ireland), President of the CCJE, underlining the importance of the work of the CCJE in the global context of the Council of Europe, as reflected in the Secretary General’s above-mentioned Report, and the Reykjavík Principles for Democracy adopted at the 4<sup>th</sup> Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (Reykjavík, Iceland, 16-17 May 2023), which stress the commitment of member states to ensuring the independence and impartiality of the judiciary;
9. **reiterated** the importance of further reinforcement of the independence and impartiality of judges in the context of priority 6 of the Strategic Framework of the Council of Europe focusing on the independence, efficiency and resilience of the judicial systems of member states. The overall preservation and further promotion of relevant European standards related to the rule of law are at the core of the CCJE mandate;
10. **took note** of the information provided by the President, as well as by the Vice-President and members of the Bureau, on the CCJE activities in 2024 and their participation in various events contributing to higher awareness of the standards developed by the CCJE;
11. also **took note** of the statements of the CCJE members underlining reforms of legal and justice systems and legislation in their respective member states and their continued

- efforts to introduce and promote the implementation of the CCJE standards; **welcomed** the increasing use of the CCJE standards in such context;
12. **welcomed** the presentation made by Mr Francesco Depasquale, President of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ), and underlined the continued close co-operation between the CCJE and the CEPEJ;
  13. **noted** in this respect the process of preparation by the CEPEJ of the Guidelines on the evaluation of the quality of work of judges and the use of the CCJE standards set out in its Opinion No. 17 (2014) on the evaluation of judges' work, the quality of justice and respect for judicial independence, and **welcomed** further reinforcement of the co-operation with the CEPEJ in this and other relevant areas;
  14. also **noted** the continued co-operation of the CCJE with other bodies and institutions of the Council of Europe, and in particular with the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) and the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission);
  15. **welcomed** the continued use of the CEPEJ and Venice Commission's standards in the CCJE Opinions and other documents, and also the use by the CEPEJ and the Venice Commission of the CCJE standards and recommendations; also **noted** the continued references to CCJE Opinions by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in its judgments;
  16. **reiterated** that it also remains at the disposal of the Committee of Ministers and other bodies of the Council of Europe (particularly the Secretary General and the Parliamentary Assembly) and of the CCJE members and observers to prepare opinions and other texts concerning the specific situation of judges in any given member states;
  17. **entrusted**, in this regard, the Bureau of the CCJE to prepare, adopt and publish such opinions and other texts concerning the specific situation of judges in any given member states;
  18. **confirmed** its intention to proceed in 2025 with the preparation of the Opinion No. 28 (2025) focusing on the work conditions for judges, and **instructed** its Bureau and the Working Group of 2025 to prepare a draft Opinion on this topic for adoption at its 26<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting in 2025;
  19. **decided** to continue entrusting the Bureau of the CCJE with the organisation of the thematic studies of the CCJE;
  20. **re-elected** Leonie Reynolds (Ireland) as President, and José Igreja Matos (Portugal) as Vice-President for 2025; **thanked** them for their outstanding work and contributions respectively as the CCJE President and Vice-President in 2024;
  21. **appointed** Marc De Werd (Netherlands), Anke Eilers (Germany), Viktor Gorodovenko (Ukraine), Kim Lewison (United Kingdom), Björn Linden (Sweden), Valeria Piccone (Italy) (tbc), Duro Sessa (Croatia), Yvonne Summer and Markus Thoma (Austria), Ketevan Tsintsadze (Georgia) as members, and Jasmina Ćosić Dedović (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ghenadie Mira (Republic of Moldova), Valéry Turcey (France), Maiia

Rousseva (Bulgaria) as substitute members of the Working Group responsible for preparing the draft Opinion in 2025 to be submitted to the 26<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting of the CCJE;

22. **appointed** Mirjana Popović (Montenegro) as the Gender Equality Rapporteur for 2025;
23. **decided** to hold its 26<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting in Strasbourg on 12-14 November 2025;
24. **decided** to hold the 48<sup>th</sup> and 49<sup>th</sup> meetings of the Working Group on 2-4 April 2025 and 2-4 July 2025, respectively.