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

**2022 – 2025 CEPEJ Action plan:
“Digitalisation for a better justice”**

*Adopted at the 37th CEPEJ plenary meeting
Strasbourg and online, 8 and 9 December 2021*

The priority of the CEPEJ for the next four years is to accompany States and courts in a successful transition towards digitalisation of justice in line with European standards and in particular Article 6 of the European Convention of Human Rights¹.

To accompany the ongoing digitalisation of judicial systems, while always ensuring that justice is human, efficient and of high quality, the CEPEJ should take into account the following orientations:

1. *Efficiency of justice*: supporting digitalisation of the administration and management of courts/prosecution services.

The transition from paper to digital court files is ongoing and necessary. Also, the administration of justice must use information technology to optimise its operations, as well as the interconnection links between the various judicial institutions. It is necessary to ensure that the tools chosen by States and courts are the most appropriate and compatible with quality, efficient, accessible, and impartial justice.

The digitalisation of procedures must improve their efficiency, but also the quality of the work to be carried out by judges, prosecutors, the teams assisting them and lawyers.

2. *Transparency of justice*: promoting digitalisation to improve knowledge on justice in general, in particular on the length of proceedings.

New technologies must provide users with better knowledge of procedures, judicial institutions and the respective roles of each of the justice professionals.

Each court must have dashboards enabling it to monitor and manage its case flow; this makes it possible to identify and limit potential backlogs, to respect reasonable timeframes and to better manage the workload of justice professionals.

3. *Collaborative justice*: setting up relevant digital tools for interconnectivity between participants in the judicial proceedings (judges, prosecutors, lawyers, other justice professionals, users).

All justice professionals contribute to the same public service, that of justice at the service of the user; they must therefore have easy-to-use, compatible, and efficient communication tools.

4. *Human justice*: adequately supporting the judges, prosecutors, their teams, and all other justice professionals to adapt their essential roles to the digital environment.

The digitalisation of justice shall make justice more efficient but must never seek to replace the judge. The judge must remain at the centre of the procedure.

5. *People-centred justice*: supporting justice professionals and users with training in order to make full use of digital tools.

The training of justice professionals, including lawyers, in the process of digital transformation is vital because it contributes not only to the efficiency of justice but also to the independence of justice, in that it allows them to act with full knowledge of the law and procedures.

Users who so wish should be supported in this digital environment, in particular by training sessions, but proficiency in these digital tools cannot become a condition for access to justice.

6. *Informed justice*: increasing the use of the results of the CEPEJ evaluation of judicial systems and other tools.




To increase the visibility, understanding; and use of the results of the evaluation exercise, CEPEJ should provide more analysed information and respond to other requests for specific analyses whenever possible.

7. *Responsible and reactive CEPEJ*: ensure the visibility of its tools so that they are accessible to all and reflect the expertise of those who developed them.

¹ In line with the "Strategic Framework of the Council of Europe" (SG/inf (2020)34).

The CEPEJ is at the service of justice professionals and users, who can ask, to create specific tailored tools, for a better justice. Its mission is to use all of the expertise at its disposal to answer their request promptly, concretely and efficiently.

Proposed improvements in the CEPEJ methodology:

-  *Giving more importance to networking and exchange of good practices*
-  *Better in-house co-ordination at the Council of Europe: the Department for the Execution of judgements of the ECHR and the ECHR could use the CEPEJ indicators, while providing the CEPEJ with useful information on dysfunctions within the judicial systems of the member states, the CAHAI for questions on artificial intelligence, the CDCJ and CDPC for coordination on the respective tools concerning the field of justice, etc.*
-  *Ensuring synergies between CEPEJ intergovernmental activities and cooperation activities, as well as between cooperation activities.*