



EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR THE EFFICIENCY OF JUSTICE
(CEPEJ)

PRESENTATION OF CEPEJ TOOLS

CEPEJ AT A GLANCE

Created in
2002

The European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) was created in 2002 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in order to improve the quality and efficiency of European judicial systems.

Innovative
objectives

The CEPEJ aims to **strengthen the confidence of litigants** in judicial systems and to **promote the public justice service**.

46 member
States

The CEPEJ is composed of representatives of the **46 member States** of the Council of Europe.

4 Working
Groups

The CEPEJ has set up various working groups to address specific areas for improvement. Currently, the CEPEJ has 4 working groups.



**Working Group on
evaluation of judicial
systems
(CEPEJ-GT-EVAL)**



**Working Group on quality of
justice
(CEPEJ-GT-QUAL)**



**Working Group on judicial
time management
(CEPEJ-SATURN)**



**Working Group on
Cyberjustice and Artificial
Intelligence
(CEPEJ-GT-CYBERJUST)**



**Working Group on mediation
(CEPEJ-GT-MED)**

From 2006 to 2007 and from 2017
to 2019

The different working groups have developed tools to improve the administration of the public justice service.

These tools are presented in the following pages.

(Click on the pictures to open the links)

3 specific
Networks

In conducting its activities, the CEPEJ also relies on three specific Networks.



**Network of CEPEJ national correspondents
(CEPEJ-GT-EVAL)**
contact points for data collection

**Network of pilot courts
(CEPEJ-GT-SATURN)**
consulted on certain issues, provide an opportunity to
test proposed measures and help to disseminate
tools



**European Cyberjustice Network
(CEPEJ-GT-CYBERJUST)**
tools dissemination, reflexion forum, exchange of
good practices

(Click on the pictures to open the links)

I. Tools developed to evaluating justice

The working group on evaluation (**CEPEJ-GT-EVAL**) is in charge of the regular evaluation process of the judicial systems of Council of Europe member States. On the basis of a questionnaire and its explanatory note, and in accordance with a well-defined and rigorous methodology, a large amount of data concerning the functioning of European judicial systems is collected by the CEPEJ via its national correspondents. The consistency and quality of the data presented by the CEPEJ rely on continuous cooperation with the national correspondents in the framework of data quality control. The data collected, which improve knowledge of judicial systems and promote the exchange of good practices, are presented in the tools developed by the working group on evaluation, but are also accessible to the public on CEPEJ-STAT.



1. The CEPEJ Evaluation Report on European judicial systems - published every 2 years

This tool is composed of two parts:

- one containing analyses of the European trends observed for the period under review, structured around a number of major topics such as budget, professionals, users' access to courts, efficiency or ICT;
- the other containing country profiles presenting a selection of key data and indicators as well as summary analyses of the main aspects of each judicial system.

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2. CEPEJ annual study for the European Union Justice Scoreboard

Since 2012, the CEPEJ carries out, upon the request of the European Commission, an annual study which constitutes one of the core sources of the "EU Justice Scoreboard" published by the European Commission.

On the basis of a questionnaire, extracted from the CEPEJ questionnaire for the evaluation of judicial systems, the CEPEJ collects data from the national correspondents of the EU member States, following the same methodology and working process.

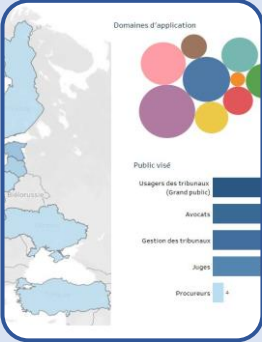
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3. CEPEJ annual Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership Dashboards

These two cooperation projects implemented by the CEPEJ at the request of the EC are also based on the methodology developed by the CEPEJ for the evaluation of judicial systems. The CEPEJ organises specific annual data collections and presents the data in a comparative manner and through country profiles containing detailed analyses of the main indicators selected in order to improve the quality, efficiency and accountability of the beneficiaries' judicial systems by achieving a better knowledge of the systems and identifying regional trends.

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4. CEPEJ- STAT

This database contains all the data and comments provided by the member States as part of the CEPEJ evaluation cycle since 2010, and is freely accessible. This tool provides access to the data but also enables certain relevant comparisons to be made, in particular through the various dashboards presented (overview of judicial systems, efficiency, budget, ICT, gender equality, judges and prosecutors).

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II. Tools developed to improve the quality of justice

The working group on the quality of justice (**CEPEJ-GT-QUAL**) is devoted to improving the quality of judicial systems. While respecting the independence of judges, it collects information on existing evaluation methods, develops tools and indicators to measure this quality and proposes concrete solutions to public decision-makers and courts in order to remedy the dysfunctions observed.

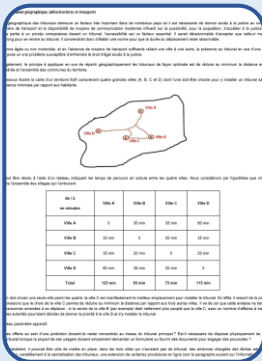
Since 2020, it also promotes mediation by continuing to develop tools in this area.



1. Checklist for promoting the quality of justice and the courts (2008)

The Checklist is intended for policy-makers, court managers and judges responsible for promoting and improving the quality of judicial services. The checklist contains a list of questions organised by area. These questions make it possible to quickly identify the existence or absence of quality policies and quality indicators. The Checklist users can verify whether or not certain areas are already covered. If not, it can be used to help develop new policies or modify existing ones.

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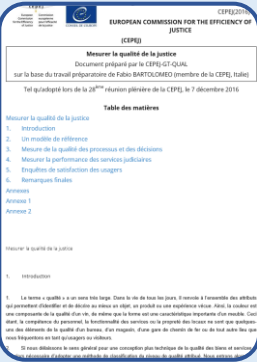
2. Revised Guidelines on the creation of judicial maps to support access to justice within a quality judicial system (2013)

Access to justice is a fundamental and essential right. For this reason, states often have to set up a more or less extensive network of courts in order to bring judicial administration closer to citizens.

Aware of these challenges, the CEPEJ has drawn up this document in order to provide a reference framework for administrators and decision-makers to undertake reforms and take operational decisions with a view to designing - or redesigning - the judicial map of all or part of a country.

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3. Measuring the quality of justice (2016)



Quality has many aspects in various fields, including the judicial ones. Systems have been developed to measure this quality, but they remain limited. The CEPEJ's approach proposes a concrete model that takes several factors into account and offers a comprehensive method with numerous indicators for evaluating judicial services. This document thus provides decision-makers and practitioners with an approach, a method and a series of indicators for measuring the quality of judicial services.

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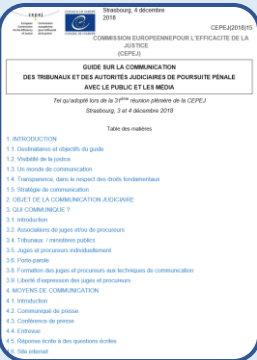
4. Handbook for conducting satisfaction surveys aimed at court users in Council of Europe member States (2016)



This manual was prepared by the CEPEJ's group of experts on the quality of justice in order to help administrators and courts to develop user satisfaction surveys for the public justice service. The surveys measure the evolution and appreciation of the services offered, thus putting in place a quality culture focused on users rather than on internal performance. The CEPEJ proposes an adaptable standard model along with a methodological guide to facilitate the process.

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5. Guide on communication with the media and the public for courts and prosecution authorities (2018)



This guide is aimed at courts and judicial authorities to help them manage their communications with the public and the media. It underlines the importance of good visibility of justice to ensure citizens' trust in their judicial system. The CEPEJ therefore intends to propose a tool enabling judicial institutions to adopt a global communication strategy using all available means.

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6. Guidelines to improve the judge's skills and competences, strengthen knowledge sharing and collaboration, and move beyond a culture of judicial isolation (2019)



This document provides an overview of the practices and tools used in Council of Europe member States to improve the quality of justice by breaking down the traditional isolation of judges. It is based on a study of information documents and responses to a questionnaire provided by the CEPEJ's network of pilot courts. Some of the key elements include access to information, sharing of experience, a favourable environment for judicial work and a professional ethical culture.

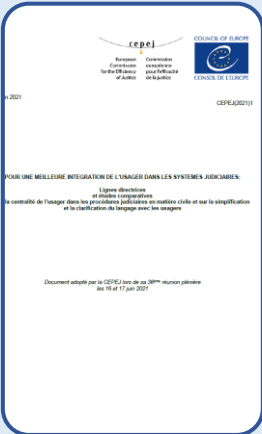
This tool enables decision-makers and practitioners to develop and improve the sharing of knowledge between judges and with external stakeholders in order to ensure quality justice.

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7. Guidelines and comparative studies on the centrality of the user in legal proceedings in civil matters and on the simplification and clarification of language with users (2021)

In this document, the CEPEJ focused on the role of the litigant as a user of the public justice service. Two comparative studies and a series of guidelines have been developed on the simplification and clarification of legal language and on putting the user at the centre of civil procedures, with the aim of improving the intelligibility of the law and mutual respect between citizens and the judicial institution. The practices of many Council of Europe member States analysed in these documents may be useful to other member States seeking to resolve these problems.

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8. Guidelines on gender equality in the recruitment and promotion of judges (2022)

Gender equality is a fundamental principle of the Council of Europe, based on the principle of non-discrimination. These guidelines aim to promote gender equality in the profession of judge, ensuring fair access for all, balanced participation and progression based on competence. They also take into account work-life balance and seek to eliminate all forms of gender discrimination and stereotypes.

This document can be used as a support tool for administrators and judges' recruitment authorities. The measures must be adapted to the different national realities.

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III. Tools developed for judicial efficiency and time management

Since its creation, the CEPEJ has focused on the timeframes of proceedings. In 2007, it set up the **CEPEJ-SATURN** Working group on judicial time management. This group is instructed to collect information necessary for the knowledge of judicial timeframes in the member States and detailed enough to enable member States to implement policies aiming to prevent violations of the right to a fair trial within a reasonable time. It also analyses these timeframes and provides member States with tools to enable courts and public prosecutors to better manage them by using existing guidelines.

1. Guide : implementing the SATURN time management tools in courts (2015)

The SATURN guide to judicial time management seeks to solve the problem of excessively long proceedings and enable courts to work in a predictable way. It involves all relevant actors, identifies obstacles and proposes practical solutions to improve judicial time management. The guide also offers a useful dialogue between the CEPEJ and European courts, as well as a four-step methodology: collection, evaluation, implementation of priorities and reporting. This guide provides administrators and practitioners with a proven method to improve court efficiency, significantly reduce the length of proceedings and ensure optimal work organisation.

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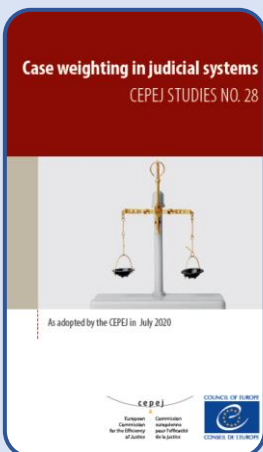


2. Towards European timeframes for judicial proceedings (Implementation Guide, 2016)

These timeframes are operational tools for assessing the functioning and policies of the justice system and for speeding up dispute resolution. They must be set for each court and case category in order to measure compliance with the requirement for a fair trial within a reasonable time.

The main objectives of this guide, which deals with these issues, are to harmonise the timeframes in Europe and to improve the overall efficiency of the judicial system in terms of fairness, affordability and time efficiency. Court administrators, court staff and justice partners will find these indicators useful in assessing their performance, improving their internal policies and complying with European human rights requirements.

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3. Case weighting in judicial systems (2020)

Measuring the complexity of judicial work is a challenging procedure, indispensable for making reasoned decisions. European practices in case weighting have been examined by the CEPEJ, highlighting the similarities and differences between the models used. There are four main features that distinguish these models: the unit of weight, the method of collecting data from judges, the breakdown of the weight and the number of case types with distinct weights. A classification scale has been proposed to assess each model according to its level of accuracy and effort required. Recommendations have also been made to guide those interested in implementing or re-evaluating a case weighting system.

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4. Handbook on court dashboards (2021)

A well balanced set of performance indicators is essential to achieving objectives, just as a driver monitors the dashboard while driving.

This handbook offers recommendations for designing judicial dashboards to improve data management and visualisation. It covers content, visualisation and technical aspects, and provides practical advice adapted to the specific needs of the judicial system. The handbook is designed to help stakeholders in judicial systems to effectively monitor and analyse court performance..

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5. Revised SATURN guidelines for judicial time management (4th revision, 2021)



In order to put the SATURN guidelines on judicial time management into practice, a national authority must carry out comparative analyses and identify the gaps in their application. Effective strategies must be developed to improve implementation. In addition, it is essential that these guidelines are translated and made accessible to all stakeholders such as courts, judicial administrations, ministries of Justice, local and national bar associations as well as services responsible for enforcing sentences.

With this in mind, the guidelines were drawn up in 2015 and updated in 2021. The various recommendations enable stakeholders in judicial systems to develop appropriate strategies for implementing the SATURN guidelines in different jurisdictions.

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6. Backlog reduction tool (2023)



This tool seeks to resolve judicial backlog problems by proposing a step-by-step methodology for developing strategies adapted to specific judicial systems. It identifies the underlying causes, proposes measures and offers adaptable approaches. The implementation requires cooperation with courts and judicial institutions.

The existence of a backlog indicates a problem of efficiency that may impede the right to a fair trial within a reasonable time. It is crucial that the authorities recognise this problem and commit to it at the highest level. A responsible body must oversee the entire process, coordinate communication with the public and guarantee the sustainability of the solutions put in place. It is therefore a precious tool that can help administrators and practitioners to resolve these persistent problems.

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7. Time management checklist (2023)



In order to avoid delays and reduce the length of judicial proceedings, it is recommended that competent authorities collect information on cases to enable monitoring and analysis of the functioning of the judicial system. In this context, the CEPEJ considered it useful to develop a Time Management Checklist to be used by stakeholders in judicial systems as it would provide a diagnostic tool to collect relevant information on cases while effectively analysing their length.

Based on this, the guide helps to put in place concrete measures aimed at resolving disputes promptly while making the process more transparent and predictable for all those who use the judicial system.

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8. Case-weighting in public prosecution services (2023)

Case weighting provides a more detailed and accurate understanding of the complexity of judicial work, facilitating informed and evidence-based management of the system. Some European courts have taken initiatives to integrate case weighting into their public prosecution services.

This tool examines different approaches to conducting case weighting analyses and measuring prosecutors' workloads, in order to identify possible applications and lessons learned. It aims to assist public decision-makers and prosecution services in the development and integration of case weighting into their operations, to improve their managerial capacities, thereby contributing to increased prosecutorial efficiency. In addition, key guiding principles representing best practices have been formulated to provide assistance to those wishing to introduce or review a case weighting system for prosecutors.

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IV. Tools developed in the field of Cyberjustice and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

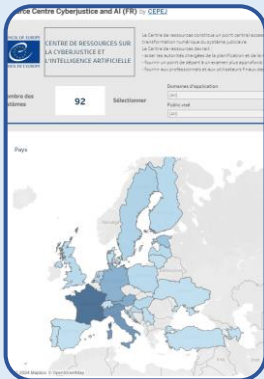
The Working Group on Cyberjustice and Artificial Intelligence (**CEPEJ-GT-CYBERJUST**) oversees developing tools to regulate the use of information and communication technologies and Artificial Intelligence mechanisms in judicial systems.

Its aim is to improve the efficiency and quality of judicial systems. The topics covered include videoconferencing, alternative dispute resolution and digital judicial proceedings.

1. Resource Centre on Cyberjustice and AI

The Resource Centre serves as a publicly accessible focal point for reliable information on AI systems and other key cyberjustice tools applied in the digital transformation of the judiciary. It shall help to gain an overview of such systems and tools, providing a starting point for further examination on their risks and benefits for professional and end-users in line with the “European ethical Charter on the use of AI in judicial systems and their environment”.

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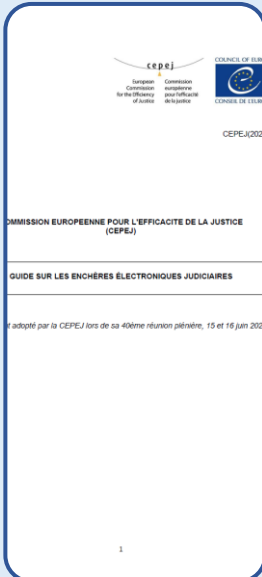
2. Guidelines on online alternative dispute resolution (2023)

Some Council of Europe member States have made progress in introducing new ADR technologies into their legal systems. However, these initiatives must comply with the fundamental principles associated with these non-adversarial or consensus-based methods of settling disputes: confidentiality, voluntary nature and independence of the service provider.

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3. Guide on judicial e-auctions (2023)

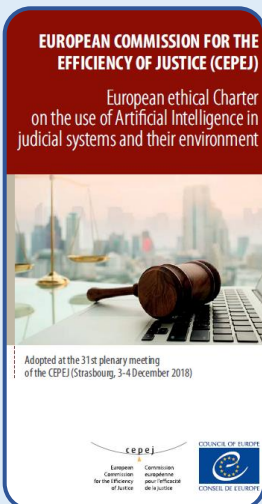


Electronic services are everywhere in our daily lives, including in the field of justice. Authorities are looking for innovative solutions to enforce judicial decisions effectively and transparently, without compromising the efficiency of the process. The guide on electronic judicial auctions developed by the CEPEJ aims to assist member States towards Cyberjustice. The guide provides a global framework covering all aspects of judicial e-auctions, complemented by a quality control checklist and a detailed comparative study on their implementation in Europe. It provides an opportunity to evaluate and improve existing functionalities and to share best practices between countries in order to improve national IT systems.

This guide is based on a [Comparative study on the use of judicial e-auctions in the Council of Europe member States](#) (2023) which aims to provide additional practical information on how and where to access e-auctions in specific countries, and to compare their main features in a condensed form.

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4. European ethical Charter on the use of Artificial Intelligence in judicial systems and their environment (2018, CEPEJ-GT-QUAL)



The Charter provides a framework of principles to guide policy makers, lawyers and legal professionals in managing the rapid development of AI in national judicial processes. The CEPEJ's view, as set out in the Charter, is that the use of AI in the field of justice can contribute to improving the efficiency and quality of the work of the courts.

Its implementation must be carried out in a responsible manner in compliance with the fundamental rights guaranteed in particular by the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Personal Data. For the CEPEJ, it is crucial to ensure that AI remains a tool at the service of the general interest and that it is used in a way that respects individual rights.

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5. Assessment Tool for the operationalisation of the European Ethical Charter on the use of Artificial Intelligence in judicial systems and their environment (2023, CEPEJ-GT-QUAL)



The Assessment Tool for the Operationalisation of the European Ethical Charter on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Judicial Systems and their Environment aims to operationalise the CEPEJ Charter by providing a set of key checks, measures and safeguards that decision-makers in judicial systems should follow when procuring, designing, developing, implementing and/or using AI in judicial systems and their environment, in order to comply with the principles of the CEPEJ Charter.

The assessment tool aligns its logic with those of compliance and risk-based regulations. In addition, it seeks to complement the Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law Impact Assessment (HUDERIA), that is currently being designed by the Council of Europe Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI), by adding a practical layer of measures towards ethical compliance applied to the judiciary.

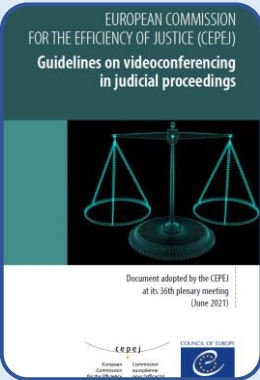
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6. Guidelines on electronic court filing (e-filing) and digitalisation of courts (2021)

The guidelines provide a complete framework covering the legal, organisational, socio-cultural and technical aspects of the digitisation of court records. They aim to establish a digital network enabling exchanges between courts and users while respecting the essential values of justice. These guidelines are adapted to the specific institutional, legal and technological features of each State in order to ensure the effective implementation of the system for the digitisation of case files while guaranteeing the proper processing of data.

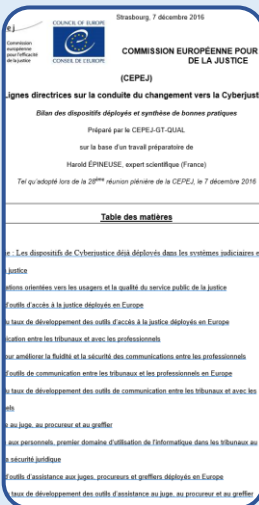
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7. Guidelines on videoconferencing in judicial proceedings (2021)

These guidelines provide a set of reference measures to ensure that the use of videoconferencing in judicial proceedings guarantees a fair and secure trial, while respecting the rights of the parties. They cover all types of legal proceedings, focusing in particular on technical aspects. An annex provides a checklist for the practical implementation of videoconferencing in the legal field, addressed to stakeholders in judicial systems.

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8. Guidelines on how to drive change towards Cyberjustice (2016, CEPEJ-GT-QUAL)

Through these Guidelines, the CEPEJ wishes not only to contribute to documenting IT applications in judicial systems by bringing together some of the most recent experiences of European judicial systems, but also to take a critical look at the evolution of IT applied to justice over the last few years, as well as the challenges it raises, both for justice professionals and for public decision-makers. It is therefore by referring to the term 'Cyberjustice' that the CEPEJ intends to promote a certain number of reflections in this field, and to provide those judicial systems wishing to do so with expertise that goes beyond the issues of developing and ensuring the proper functioning of IT tools, to embrace all the changes at work in the way justice is dispensed using information and communication technologies.

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9. Toolkit for the implementation of the Guidelines on Cyberjustice (2019, CEPEJ-GT-QUAL)

Faced with an increasing demand for support in this field within the framework of its co-operation programmes, the CEPEJ has taken the initiative to develop a Toolkit for supporting the implementation of the Guidelines on how to drive change towards Cyberjustice. The toolkit is intended to be a practical instrument for policy makers and for all those involved in the implementation of CEPEJ cooperation activities.

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V. Tools developed in the field of mediation

The Working group on Mediation (**CEPEJ-GT-MED**), which was operational from 2006 to 2007 and from 2017 to 2019, has played a key role in the development of mediation practices in Europe, covering family, criminal, administrative and civil matters. It has drawn up guidelines for the effective application of the Committee of Ministers' recommendations. Since 2020, it has been an integral part of the **CEPEJ-GT-QUAL** group and continues its work under this new structure.



1. Mediation development toolkit (2018)

The toolkit aims to support member States in developing mediation practices through a range of practical instruments. The toolkit enables the parties involved to adapt the proposed tools to their specific needs: checklists to facilitate national pilot projects, a document for judges and court clerks on judicial referral to mediation, a training programme for novice mediators, documents to raise awareness in the legal professions (bailiffs, notaries, lawyers), frequently asked questions to raise awareness of the concept of mediation itself, and a specific guide for lawyers drawn up with the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE).

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2. European Handbook for Mediation Lawmaking (2019)

This handbook proposes effective practices for mediation, encouraging legislators to adopt laws in accordance with international standards. It highlights the importance of taking into account the national legal context and choosing appropriate recommendations.

Excessive regulation can hinder the natural development of mediation. The Handbook is divided into two parts: one with concrete examples reflecting good practices and a comparative analysis explaining certain provisions.

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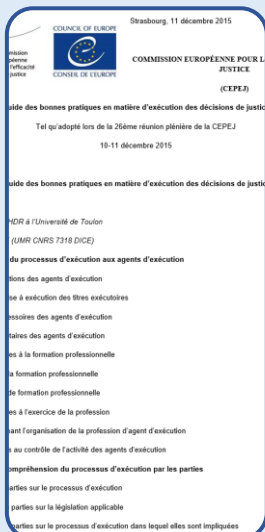


3. Promoting mediation to resolve administrative disputes in Council of Europe member States (2022)

The aim of the guide to administrative mediation is to promote and facilitate the use of administrative mediation in the member States through a practical and concrete approach. The guide seeks to highlight the specific features of mediation in administrative matters, but it is not intended to make mediation a substitute for recourse to the courts or to remedy the dysfunctions of the judicial system. The guide also emphasises the advantages of the process before proposing the adoption of certain measures designed to promote the widest possible development of mediation in this area.

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VI. Tool developed on enforcement of judicial decisions



1. Good practice guide on enforcement of judicial decisions (2015)

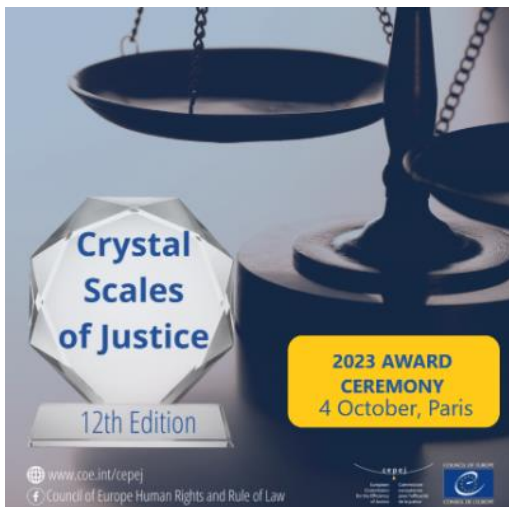
It is a guide highlighting good practice in enforcement in the member States. Its aim is to improve the quality of civil enforcement. The guide presents an overview of the practices implemented in the different member States; proposes recommendations and measures to be followed for each of the four areas, which are:

1. the control of enforcement processes by enforcement agents
2. the understanding of the enforcement process by the parties
3. the improvement of the quality of enforcement procedures
4. the promotion of a common legal terminology on enforcement

The stakeholders of the judicial systems will benefit from these measures by strengthening their understanding of the judicial system.

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VII. Crystal Scales of Justice Prize



Created in 2005, the "Crystal Scales of Justice" Prize is a competition aimed at discovering and highlighting innovative and efficient practices concerning the functioning of justice, judicial procedures, or the organisation of courts.

The competition is open to courts, bar associations, legal professionals, NGOs, or bodies responsible for judicial matters in a Council of Europe member State or in an observer country to the CEPEJ.

The aim of the prize is to identify and promote innovative practices regarding the conduct of proceedings, court organisation and the functioning of court systems in general.

The initiatives rewarded with the Crystal Scales of Justice Prize are also used as inspiration by Master 1 and Master 2 law students from one of the Council of Europe member States or from a country with observer status at the CEPEJ during the Crystal Scales of Justice Prize Junior.

The student teams must defend one of the winning projects of the Crystal Scales of Justice Prize. They will have to highlight the innovative aspects of the project through a legal analysis and research work and study its possible transposition to another context or another country.



(Click on the pictures to open the links)