



Annual Report 2020



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1 | Foreword



The year 2020 was an exceptional year for the CCBE, not only due to the COVID-19 pandemic that influenced and shaped most of our procedures and activities, but also due to the following elements.

First of all, it was the year of the 60th anniversary of the CCBE which, due to the pandemic, suffered of total depriving of physical festivities. Despite that, the CCBE managed to conduct the working part of marking this important anniversary. On 27 October, the CCBE successfully organised and conducted an online round table entitled: “Europe’s approach to e-justice: How can the EU ensure that the digitalisation of justice reinforces, rather than undermines, access to justice?”. This event gathered high-level speakers from the European institutions and 150 participants.

The CCBE has also been very proactive with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences to the present and future of the legal community in the EU, Europe and beyond. The CCBE has been actively trying to analyse and assist its members in an attempt to limit the impact of COVID-19 on the legal profession. Among other things, the CCBE promoted the exchanging of experiences by circulating among its members questionnaires and surveys from the beginning of the pandemic. The feedback received helped identifying urgent matters that needed to be addressed concerning the impact of COVID-19 and highlighted best practices by Bars or law firms. The CCBE also alerted the European Commission on the consequences of COVID-19 and the impact of the measures taken on the rule of law, access to justice, cost of justice, and lawyers. A CCBE COVID-19 Taskforce was created in spring to deal specifically with the impact of COVID-19 on the legal profession and the judiciary in general. Furthermore, several reports, statements and guidance were adopted and published by the CCBE on issues such as the reactivation of justice, systematic risks for the rule of law and contact tracing apps, the use of remote working tools by lawyers and remote court proceedings, etc.

Another important issue to deal with was the consequences of BREXIT for the CCBE membership. In order to take into account on the one hand the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, and on the other hand, the CCBE’s wish to keep the UK delegation as a member, a new form of membership has been created: the UK delegation became an “affiliate member”. This new membership status allows the UK delegation to remain active within the CCBE, with certain restrictions, in particular on matters relating to EU policies. I am very happy with the solution found as it is satisfactory for all parties and will allow the continuation of a fruitful cooperation with our British colleagues.

Let me conclude by highlighting the important work done to strengthen our cooperation with the Council of Europe which is

expected to reach a new milestone next year. In the framework of this collaboration, I would like to stress the CCBE's strong support for the work carried out by the Council of Europe for a future European Convention on the legal profession. The CCBE very much hopes that this initiative will receive the green light from the Council of Europe, as such a specific binding instrument is necessary to preserve the independence of the legal profession, and therefore the rule of law. Despite the relevance of the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, in their 30 years of existence, the European society needs such a convention to preserve the independence and integrity of the administration of justice and therefore the rights and freedoms of its citizens. The social and political environment has changed considerably in recent years and the position of lawyers, and through them the position of their clients, is much more threatened in a way that could not have been foreseen at the time of the adoption of the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers. In this context, I firmly believe that the adoption of such a Convention in the near future will remain one of the main objectives of the CCBE.



Ranko Pelicarić
2020 CCBE President

2 | CCBE Membership 2020

45 Member countries

3 Associate members

32 Full members

10 Observer members



More than
1 M
European
Lawyers



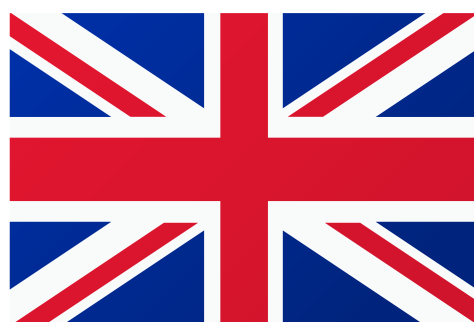
Bars & Law Societies

Changes in 2020

As a result of the decisions taken by the CCBE at its November Plenary Session, the following changes in the membership were introduced:

BREXIT

In order to take into account on the one hand the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, and on the other hand, to keep the UK delegation as a member of the CCBE, a new form of membership has been created i.e. affiliate member. This new membership status allows the UK delegation to remain active within the CCBE, with certain restrictions, in particular on matters relating to EU policies.



Albania and North Macedonia

Following the opening of accession negotiations to the EU with the Republic of North Macedonia and the Republic of Albania, the membership status of the Albanian Chamber of Advocacy and the North Macedonia Bar Association has changed to associate.



3 | A years in figures

45

Positions & publications

These documents, which may take the form of position papers, contributions, guidance, recommendations, statements etc. cover topics of particular importance for the legal profession such as the rule of law, digitalisation of justice, deontology, human rights, the European Courts, etc. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on justice and the legal profession has obviously been one of the issues dealt with by the CCBE. CCBE position papers are adopted by its member Bars during Standing Committees or Plenary Sessions, on the basis of the work carried out by the committees and working groups ([see the list of positions & publications page 20](#)).

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Standing Committees & Plenary Sessions

The CCBE member Bars met eight times in Standing Committees (two extraordinary Standing Committees on particular topics) and twice in Plenary Sessions (full delegations) in order to exchange on the work in progress and to adopt common positions on issues requiring an initiative or reaction from the legal profession.

70

Committee & working group meetings

The 27 CCBE committees & working groups are composed of lawyers from CCBE member Bars. These meetings provide an opportunity to exchange views between experts from different countries to prepare draft position papers to be submitted for approval by the delegations during Standing Committees or Plenary Sessions ([See the overview of topics dealt with by committees & working groups page 23](#))

2

Events

The CCBE organised the following events:

- **On 27 October**, an online roundtable entitled “Europe’s approach to e-Justice: How can the EU ensure that the digitalisation of justice reinforces, rather than undermines, access to justice?” was organised in the framework of the celebration of the CCBE 60th anniversary (1960-2020).
- **On 10 December**, a webinar was organised on the occasion of the International Day for Human Rights to discuss the situation of the legal profession in Turkey.

80

Participations in external events & meetings

Through its presidency, its committee & working group chairs, its experts and members of the secretariat, the CCBE participates in many external events organised at European or international level in order to make the voice of European lawyers heard. Most of the time, the CCBE participates as a speaker or main interlocutor. This activity includes bilateral meetings with key actors at European level such as Commissioners, Members of the European Parliament, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, the European External Action Service, the Council of Europe, the EU Courts, the European Court of Human Rights, etc.

4 | Highlights

A | 60th Anniversary of the CCBE

The CCBE celebrated 60 years of existence in 2020 (1960-2020). 60 years of an unwavering commitment to justice, law and the defence of citizens' rights. Since its creation in 1960, the CCBE has been at the forefront of advancing the views of European lawyers and defending the legal principles upon which democracy and the rule of law are based.

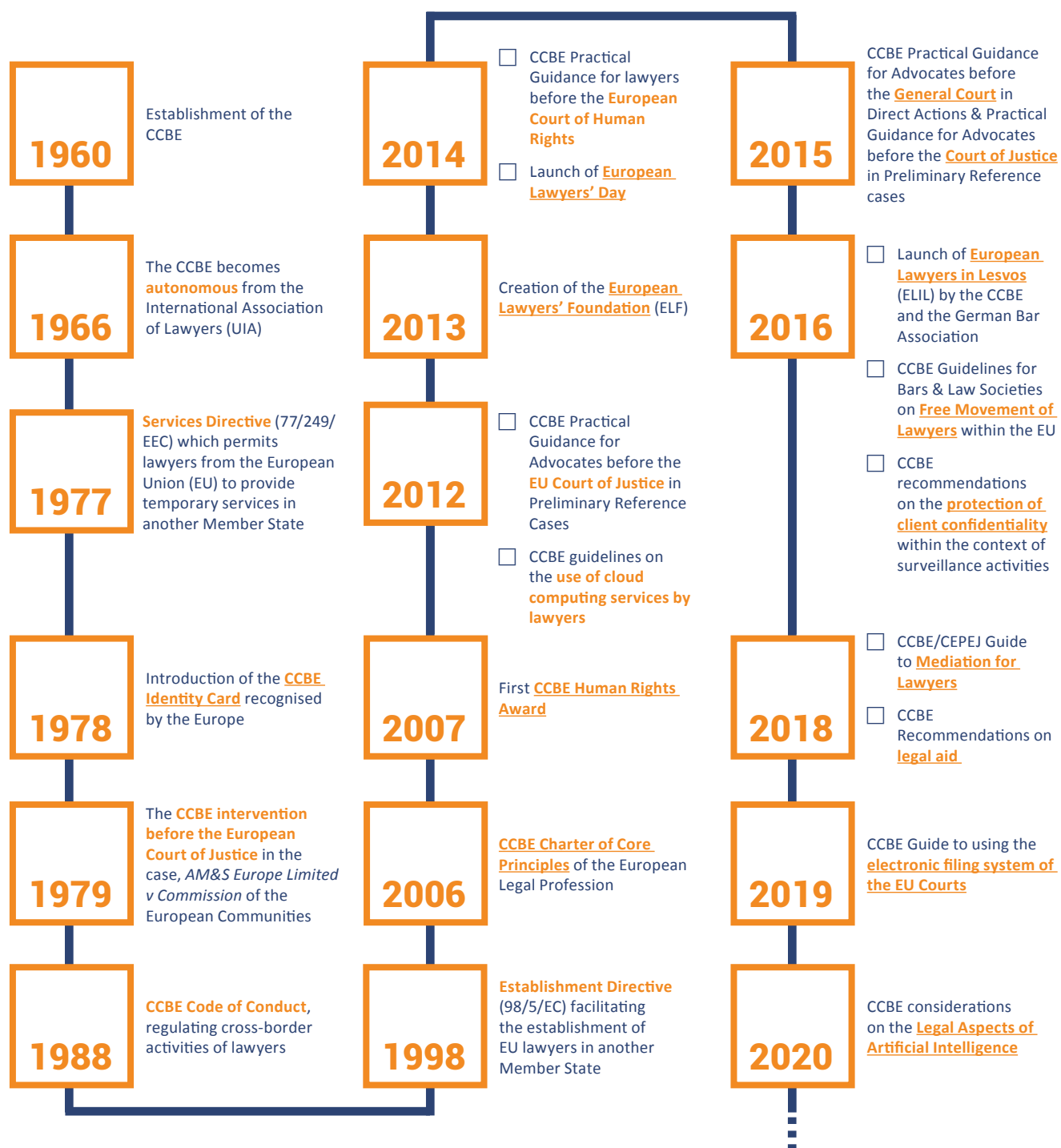


Its main achievements include among other things: the CCBE Code of Conduct, the CCBE Charter of Core Principles of the European Legal Profession, the participation in the work that led to Directive 98/5/EC on the Freedom of establishment of lawyers, the CCBE Identity Card, the CCBE interventions in major court cases at European level, the publication of practical guides for lawyers acting before the EU courts and the European Court of Human Rights, the CCBE Human Rights Award, the creation of a European Lawyers' Day, the launch of the initiative European Lawyers in Lesbos (jointly with the German Bar) and of course, the numerous publications of position papers, recommendations, guidance, and statements on issues that are of importance to justice and the legal profession.

To celebrate its 60th anniversary, the CCBE organised on 27 October 2020 an online roundtable entitled "Europe's approach to e-Justice: How can the EU ensure that the digitalisation of justice reinforces, rather than undermines, access to justice?" ([see highlight C on the Digitalisation of Justice](#)).

Through the years, the CCBE has become the recognised voice of European lawyers and has developed close cooperation with the EU institutions and EU agencies (such as the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights), the EU courts, the European Court of Human Rights, the Council of Europe as well as with other international bodies and lawyers' organisations.

Key dates in the history of the CCBE



B | COVID-19 pandemic

The pandemic of COVID-19 has greatly affected the functioning of the justice systems and the legal profession which in turn has contributed to creating challenges regarding access to justice, the protection of democratic standards as well as the upholding of the rule of law and human rights all over the world. In this context, the CCBE has undertaken the following initiatives:

■ Surveys and best practices exchanges

The CCBE has been actively trying to analyse and assist its member Bars and Law Societies in an attempt to limit the impact of COVID-19 on the legal profession. The CCBE promoted the exchange of experiences by circulating questionnaires and surveys to its members from the beginning of the pandemic. The feedback received helped highlighting urgent matters that need to be addressed concerning the impact of COVID-19 on, for example, the legal profession, female lawyers with children in particular, and asylum law. The CCBE also enabled the exchange of best practices through these questionnaires such as on potential measures taken by its members and their bars or law firms. All this information (and much more, such as reports adopted at national level and other institutions at EU and international level) is available on the [CCBE webpage dedicated to COVID-19 issues](#).



■ Creation of a COVID-19 Taskforce

A [Taskforce](#) was created in spring to specifically deal with the impact of COVID-19 on the legal profession and the judiciary in general, whereas different CCBE committees continued to work on COVID-19 related topics in their specific fields of competence.

■ Alert of the EU institutions on the need to reactivate and support the justice sector

The CCBE has undertaken a number of initiatives to alert the EU institutions on the implications of the COVID-19 crisis on justice and to request support for the justice sector. The CCBE sent letters to the European Commission on the consequences of COVID-19 and the impact of the measures taken on the rule of law, access to justice and cost of justice and lawyers. The CCBE also published a [statement on the need for a reactivation of justice in Europe](#).

urging the European institutions and all member states to facilitate the complete reactivation of justice systems in Europe, while promoting health and safety measures, invest in justice and legal aid urgently and provide support to promote access to justice as well as guarantee citizens' rights. This statement was subsequently followed by the publication of another [contribution expressing the CCBE concerns and propositions regarding the phase of reactivation of the justice system](#). In this document, the CCBE expressed the need to ensure the protection of fundamental rights as well as the safety of all court users. It also addressed two important challenges to be solved: backlogs and difficulties in relation to legal aid.

Systemic risks for the rule of law

Responding to the COVID-19 threats, many countries have understandably taken emergency measures and legislation to contain the risk of mass infection, to safeguard the medical capacity to deal with infections and to address the economic consequences of the crisis. In its [statement about systemic risks for the rule of law in times of the pandemic](#), the CCBE expressed its concerns about those measures, in the light of the de facto absence of Parliamentary monitoring and judicial review. The CCBE therefore called member states not to abuse such “State of Emergency” provisions or “Special Powers” granted to the Executive. The CCBE pleaded for adequate sunset clauses for such measures and legislation as foreseen in the constitutional and fundamental laws of most European countries. The reactivation of justice systems in member states will further contribute to a more regular judicial review of measures taken under such regimes.

Contact tracing apps

In a [statement on COVID-19 contact tracing apps](#), the CCBE voiced its concerns and set out a number of principles that need to be upheld when governments and private actors turn towards using contact tracing apps as a component in a wider programme of infection limitation and control of the COVID-19 pandemic. The CCBE acknowledged the imperative upon national governments to protect the health of their citizens and urgently limit the spread of infection. However, when introducing contact tracing apps as a means of doing so, the CCBE highlighted the potential infringements which the use of such apps may cause to fundamental rights, including the right to privacy and the right to restriction of processing of personal data. Such infringements can be acceptable only if justified on the basis of proportionality.

The use of remote working tools by lawyers and remote court proceedings

The CCBE published a [guidance to facilitate the use of remote working tools by lawyers and on the conduct of remote court proceedings](#). The pandemic has forced rapid changes in the way lawyers work and this challenge must be seen as a great opportunity that can drive forward the digitisation of society and judicial systems. However, a balance must be found with the preservation of certain values which remain unchangeable, such as the respect for professional secrecy and the legal professional privilege, compliance with data protection and deontological obligations and the over-arching requirement to provide a fair trial.

Application of the hardship clause in situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic

The CCBE adopted a [guidance entitled “CCBE considerations on change of circumstances legislation”](#). The paper aims to provide some guidance on the application of the hardship clause (formerly known as “rebus sic stantibus”) in a situation such as the COVID-19 pandemic where commercial activities have stopped, and contracts cannot be fulfilled. Such guidance may be useful considering that the current pandemic is unfortunately not over and a similar crisis might also occur in the near future.

European Lawyers’ Day (ELD)

The 2020 edition of ELD, held every year on 25 October, focused on the theme: “Continuity of justice and respect of human rights in times of pandemic”. ELD 2020 was an opportunity for Bars and Law Societies to highlight the different challenges raised in the event of a pandemic, such as the digitalisation of justice, access to justice, procedural safeguards, surveillance issues, etc. The material published by the CCBE as well as the events organised by Bar and Law Societies can be found in the [dedicated page of the CCBE website](#).



C | Digitalisation of Justice

The digitalisation and use of new technologies is an important opportunity and also a real challenge. As lawyers play an essential role to ensure access to justice, the defence of the rule of law and protection of fundamental rights, they have a particular role to play when it comes to the further development and deployment of AI tools, especially in those areas where access to justice and due process are at stake. The CCBE is particularly active on this topic and its main activities in 2020 can be summarised as follows:

■ CCBE Roundtable on the digitalisation of justice



In the framework of the celebration of its 60th anniversary, the CCBE organised on 27 October an online roundtable entitled “Europe’s approach to e-Justice: How can the EU ensure that the digitalisation of justice reinforces, rather than undermines, access to justice?”. After a welcome speech by the CCBE President, Ranko Pelicarić, the first session was focused on the issue of digitalisation and access to justice. This session included a statement by Christine Lambrecht, German Federal Minister of Justice and Consumer, and interventions by Didier Reynders, European Commissioner for Justice and Consumers, as well as Jiří Novák, Chair of the CCBE IT Law Committee. The second session focused on the use of innovative technologies in justice and included interventions from Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Chair of the European Parliament Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, James MacGuill, CCBE Vice-President, and Dory Reiling, IT and judicial reform expert, retired Senior Judge of the Amsterdam District Court. This high-level event proved to be very successful with 150 participants including representatives of EU institutions, the Council of Europe, the EU Agency of Fundamental Rights, national Ministries as well as representatives of Bars/Law Societies and lawyers. The conclusions of the roundtable and speakers’ interventions are available on the [CCBE website](#).

■ Considerations on the legal aspects of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The CCBE published a [paper on the legal aspects of AI](#) in which it sets out a number of considerations about the various legal aspects arising out of the use of AI in areas which most directly concern the legal profession: AI and human rights (in particular the right to life, the right to a fair trial, the right to freedom of expression, the right to freedom of assembly and association and the right to privacy and data protection), the use of AI by Courts, the use of AI in criminal justice systems, liability for AI-driven applications, as well as the impact of AI on legal practice.

■ Contribution to the European Data Strategy

On 28 May 2020, the CCBE responded to the European Commission Consultation on the European Data Strategy. The [CCBE contribution](#) focuses on potential fundamental rights implications and the use of data in the field of so-called legal tech as implied in the Data Strategy.

Comments on the Commission's Roadmap on the digitalisation of justice

On 30 July 2020, the Commission published a Roadmap on the digitalisation of justice in the EU. This initiative is of utmost importance for the legal profession, as one of the main users of justice systems. For this reason, the CCBE, in its [comments](#) on the Roadmap, stressed the importance that lawyers, through Bars and Law Societies, were fully involved in the development of e-justice. The CCBE believes that the digitalisation of justice could bring many advantages, such as better access to justice and faster and more efficient proceedings. Nevertheless, these developments must be coupled with sufficient safeguards ensuring due process and protection of professional secrecy.

Contribution to the European Commission's White Paper on Artificial Intelligence

The [CCBE responded to the consultation](#) on the European Commission's White Paper on Artificial Intelligence and underlined that AI tools must be properly adapted to the justice environment taking into account the principles and procedural architecture underpinning judicial proceedings.

Guidance on the use of remote working tools by lawyers and remote court proceedings

The CCBE adopted a [Guidance](#) addressing two issues of major importance for lawyers, namely (a) the use of remote working tools and (b) remote court proceedings ([see highlights B on Covid-19 pandemic page 13](#)).

EVIDENCE2e-CODEX project

The CCBE organised a panel discussion during the final conference of the EVIDENCE2e-CODEX project entitled 'Digital Cross-Border Cooperation in Criminal Justice Conference' which took place on 21-22 January 2020. This event marked the end of the 2-year project, which sought to create a legally valid instrument to exchange digital evidence over the e-CODEX infrastructure in the context of Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) and European Investigative Order (EIO) procedures. The conference brought together 24 member states, the Council of the European Union, INTERPOL, EUROPOL, EUROJUST, EJM, EJTN, EDPS, and other EU bodies, alongside civil society, academia, training and professional organisations, including the CCBE.

AI4Lawyers project

2020 also marked the launch of a new '[AI4Lawyers](#)' project run by the CCBE and the European Lawyers' Foundation (ELF). This project targets the necessity for European lawyers and law firms to have a clear understanding of the use of AI and other novel IT technologies in their daily practice. The project's main aim is threefold: (a) to create an overview of the average state of the art of the IT capabilities of lawyers and small law firms in the EU, (b) to identify the opportunities and barriers in the use of natural language processing tools in small and medium-sized (SME) law practices, (c) the drafting of a guide on the use of AI by lawyers and law firms in the EU. This project, which is financed by the European Commission, has a duration of 24 months and should be concluded by 31 March 2022.



D | Rule of Law

CCBE action is built on strengthening the rule of law in the EU and clarifying the role of lawyers in upholding the rule of law and defending Human Rights. The CCBE supports the wish of the EU to be the strongest advocate and defender of the rule of law while stressing the need to ensure that EU legislation does not inadvertently impact the independence of actors in the administration of justice, including lawyers, and on individuals' fundamental rights. Several initiatives were taken by the CCBE in 2020 including the following actions:

■ Appointment of a Rule of Law Advisor

In early 2020, Attracta O'Regan, an experienced expert on rule of law issues, was appointed as a Rule of Law Advisor of the CCBE to ensure the implementation of objectives cited in the CCBE Statutes (Article III), to reinforce and strengthen the work of the CCBE on issues related to defence of the rule of law and to ensure monitoring and coordinated contribution to the work and priorities of EU institutions, agencies and other relevant stakeholders.

■ Meeting with the European Commissioner for Justice

In the framework of the European Presidents' Conference in February in Vienna, the CCBE Presidency and Secretary General had a meeting with Commissioner for Justice Didier Reynders to discuss the involvement of lawyers in the Rule of Law Review Cycle launched for the first time in 2020 by the Commission.

■ Contribution to the first annual Rule of Law Report

The first annual Rule of Law Report was one of the major initiatives of the Commission Work Programme for 2020. It intends to monitor significant developments relating to the rule of law in the EU member states. In its [contribution](#) to the preparation of this Report, the CCBE reported about various developments regarding the most relevant and important activities of the CCBE in the area of the rule of law.

Following the publication of the first annual Rule of Law Report on 30 September 2020, the CCBE intensively interacted with the Commission on this matter and organised an extraordinary Standing Committee to discuss the result. These exchanges resulted in the publication of a [CCBE statement on the 2020 Rule of Law Report](#) in which the CCBE highlighting the important role of lawyers and Bars in ensuring access to justice and respect for the rule of law affirmed its readiness to cooperate with the EU institutions in this regard.



■ Rule of law in Poland

☐ Joint resolution on the rule of law

The CCBE, together with other lawyers' organisations and Bar Associations adopted a [resolution on the rule of law](#) in the framework of the 48th European Presidents' Conference in Vienna.

☐ Legal Opinion on the request for a preliminary ruling submitted by the Disciplinary Court of the Bar Association in Warsaw (pending Case C-55/20) by Professor Laurent Pech

The CCBE commissioned Professor Laurent Pech to draft a [legal opinion](#) on the request for a preliminary ruling submitted by the Disciplinary Court of the Bar Association in Warsaw (DCBAW) to the European Court of Justice on 31 January 2020. The issue at the origin of the pending case (C-55/20) concerned the appeal of Poland's Minister of Justice (who is simultaneously the Public Prosecutor General) against a decision by the disciplinary court to discontinue disciplinary proceedings against a lawyer.

■ Rule of law in Bulgaria

On 28 October 2020, the CCBE issued a [statement on the rule of law situation in Bulgaria](#) expressing concerns regarding the developments in Bulgaria which led to a significant deterioration in respect of the independence of the judiciary, the separation of powers, and the fight against corruption. The CCBE expressed its support to the Bulgarian Bar in its efforts to uphold the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary and expresses its solidarity with lawyers in their legitimate demands and aspirations for justice, transparency, and democratic principles.

E | Human Rights

In addition to statements and letters regularly sent and published in support of threatened lawyers worldwide which can be consulted on the [CCBE webpage Defence of the defenders](#), the two events below, organised in 2020, should be particularly highlighted:

CCBE Human Rights Award



Each year, the CCBE grants a Human Rights Award to a lawyer or a lawyers' organisation who particularly distinguished themselves in their commitment to human rights. The CCBE Human Rights Award 2020 was granted to seven detained Egyptian lawyers for their courage, determination and commitment to defending human rights in Egypt: **Haytham Mohammadein, Hoda Abdelmoniem, Ibrahim Metwally Hegazy, Mahienour El-Massry, Mohamed El-Baqer, Mohamed Ramadan, and Zyad El-Eleimy.**

The CCBE also granted an exceptional posthumous Human Rights Award to Turkish lawyer **Ebru Timtik** who died this year of hunger strike fighting and defending the right to a fair trial in Turkey.

The CCBE Human Rights Award online ceremony took place during the CCBE Plenary Session on 27 November 2020 with the participation as keynote speaker of the UN Special Rapporteur on the independence

of judges and lawyers, Diego García-Sayán. His speech is available on the CCBE Human Rights portal [here](#).

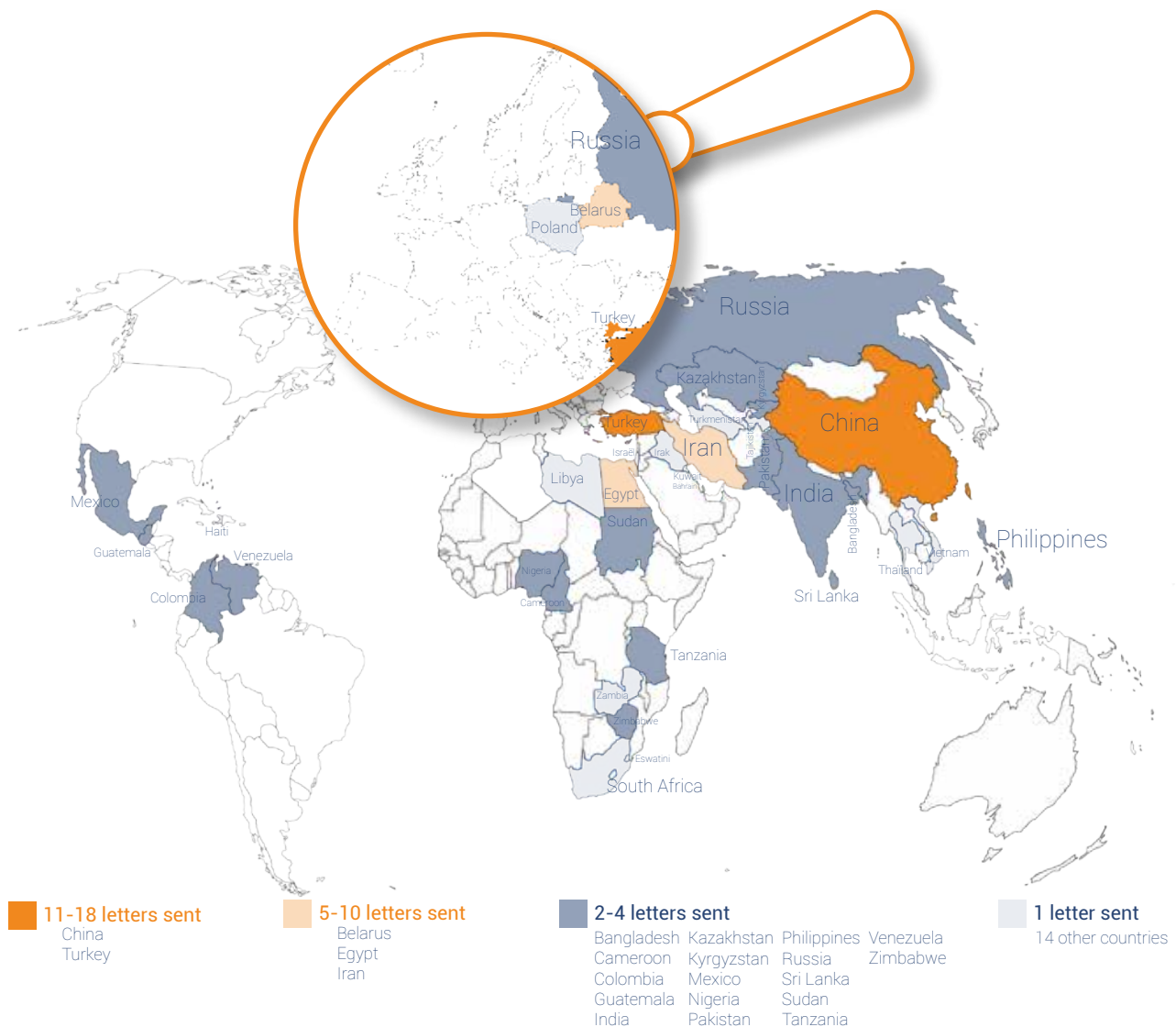


Webinar on the situation of the legal profession in Turkey

On 10 December 2020, the CCBE organised a [webinar](#) on the occasion of the International Day for Human Rights to discuss the situation of the legal profession in Turkey. This event was moderated by the Chair of the CCBE Human Rights Committee, Stefan von Raumer, with interventions from the UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, as well as from representatives of the Council of Europe, the Union of Turkish Bar Associations (UTBA); and the human rights centre of the Istanbul Bar Association.

Furthermore, on that occasion, the CCBE published a [statement](#) calling on the Turkish authorities to uphold the rule of law by bringing an end to the persecution of lawyers and by refraining from taking any measure which would have the effect of hindering the independence, integrity and freedom of expression of the legal profession in Turkey. The statement also stressed that all lawyers who have been unduly detained for carrying out their professional activities should be immediately released.

In **2020** the CCBE sent
112 letters in support of endangered lawyers
 in **36** countries around the world



12 % Murder | Attempt murder | Death



51 % Arrest | Detention | Prison | Prosecution



29 % Threats | Assault | Harassment | Ill-treatment |
 Travel Ban | Break-in | Abduction



8 % Deprivation of the right to exercise the legal profession
 and attack against the independance of the legal profession

5 | CCBE Activities

A | Positions & publications

■ COVID-19

10/04/2020	Letter to Mrs V Jourova
10/04/2020	Letter to Mrs U von der Leyen
10/04/2020	Letter to Mr D Reynders
20/05/2020	CCBE Statement for the reactivation of Justice in Europe
24/06/2020	CCBE concerns and propositions regarding the current phase of reactivation of the justice system in the light of the COVID

■ Criminal Law

20/02/2020	Guide to assist EU Defence Practitioners
12/05/2020	CCBE comments in response to the Commission "Consultation of judges, other justice practitioners and training institutions on the new European Commission Strategy on the effective application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the EU"

■ Deontology / Towards a Model Code of Conduct

27/11/2020	Model Article on Relations with Clients
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■ EU Lawyers

20/02/2020	Interpretation issues in relation to free movement of lawyers
14/10/2020	CCBE comments for a New Competition Tool as part of a future legislation to be proposed by the European Commission

■ European Convention on the Profession of Lawyer

07/09/2020	CCBE Statement on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the UN Basic Principles on the role of lawyers
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■ European Private Law

- 02/10/2020 [CCBE remarks on the EU possible accession to the Judgments convention](#)
- 02/10/2020 [CCBE response to the consultation on the New Consumer Agenda](#)
- 02/10/2020 [CCBE response to the public consultation on the proposal for a Council decision on the accession to the Judgments Convention](#)
- 27/11/2020 [CCBE remarks on change of circumstances legislation](#)

■ Family & Succession Law

- 08/12/2020 [CCBE response to the consultation on the EU strategy on the rights of the child \(2021-2024\)](#)

■ Future of the Legal Profession and Legal Services

- 04/09/2020 [CCBE Responses to the Digital Services Act package: open public consultation](#)

■ Human Rights

- 29/06/2020 [Press release: Turkey: Independence, integrity and freedom of expression of the legal profession at stake](#)
- 18/08/2020 [CCBE President statement in support of Turkish lawyers Ebru Timtik and Aytaç Ünsal](#)
- 31/08/2020 [Press release: Turkey: Following the tragic death of lawyer Ebru Timtik, the CCBE calls on the EU and Turkish authorities to take urgent measures to prevent the death of lawyer Aytaç Ünsal](#)
- 10/12/2020 [CCBE Statement on the situation of the legal profession in Turkey](#)

■ IT Law

- 20/02/2020 [CCBE considerations on the Legal Aspects of AI](#)
- 28/05/2020 [CCBE response to the European Commission Consultation on the European Data Strategy](#)
- 05/06/2020 [CCBE Response to the consultation on the European Commission's White Paper on Artificial Intelligence](#)
- 04/09/2020 [CCBE comments on the roadmap on the digitalisation of justice in the EU](#)
- 03/11/2020 [Open letter from the CCBE President on the future of e CODEX and involvement of the CCBE](#)

■ Migration

- 06/03/2020 [CCBE statement as regards the position adopted by the Greek Government regarding asylum seekers at its borders in recent days](#)
- 25/03/2020 [CCBE Letter addressed to the European Commission regarding the situation at the Greek Turkish border](#)
- 26/08/2020 [CCBE Response to the EU Commission consultation on the New Pact on Migration and Asylum roadmap](#)

■ PECO

- 03/06/2020 [Georgia - CCBE amicus curiae brief in the constitutional case Lasha Janibegashvili vs. the Parliament of Georgia](#)

■ Permanent Delegation to the Court of Justice and the General Court of the European Union and the EFTA Court (PD LUX)

- 04/09/2020 [CCBE comments on the functioning of the General Court](#)

■ Permanent Delegation to the European Court of Human Rights (PD STRAS)

- 07/04/2020 [CCBE position on the amendment of Rules 36 and 44 of the Rules of Court of the ECHR](#)
- 13/11/2020 [CCBE Proposals to DH-SYSC-V on enhancing the national implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights and the execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights](#)
- 14/12/2020 [CCBE Guide: The European Court of Human Rights - Questions & Answers for Lawyers \(2020\)](#)

■ Rule of Law

- 30/01/2020 [CCBE Statement on Poland](#)
- 21/02/2020 [Resolution on the Rule of Law 2020](#)
- 14/05/2020 [CCBE – Stakeholder Submission to Rule of Law Report 2020 - Horizontal Developments](#)
- 15/05/2020 [CCBE Statement about systemic risks for the Rule of Law in times of the pandemic](#)
- 28/10/2020 [CCBE Statement on the Rule of Law in Bulgaria](#)
- 17/12/2020 [CCBE statement on the 2020 Rule of Law Report](#)

■ Surveillance

- 06/01/2020 [Joint Statement to encourage EU legislators to fight for fundamental rights protections in e Evidence legislation](#)
- 24/02/2020 [CCBE Letter regarding the interception of communications between Julian Assange and his lawyers](#)
- 15/05/2020 [CCBE Statement on Covid-19 contact tracing apps](#)
- 27/11/2020 [CCBE Guidance on the use of remote working tools by lawyers and remote court proceedings](#)

■ Training

- 27/04/2020 [The contribution of the CCBE for the next EU policy on judicial training](#)

B | Committees & Working Groups



Access to Justice

Chair: Elisabeth SCHEUBA (Austria)

The Access to Justice Committee contributed to the work of the drafting group on Legal Aid Schemes of the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) of the Council of Europe regarding the development of guidelines aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of national legal aid schemes in the areas of civil and administrative law. For the 2021 edition of the EU Justice Scoreboard, the Committee collaborated with the European Commission by gathering data on the level of court fees, as well as on financial eligibility criteria for legal aid in civil and commercial law across EU Member States. It also continued monitoring the legislative developments concerning the proposal for a Directive on representative actions for the protection of the collective interests of consumers and initiated an analysis on the future implementation of this regulation at national level. Upon invitation of the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), the Committee also participated in the Stakeholder Advisory Group which advises and supports EUIPO's activities in the field of ADR.

Anti-Money Laundering (AML)

Chair: Rupert MANHART (Austria)

In 2020, the European Commission adopted an Action Plan for a comprehensive Union policy on preventing money laundering and terrorism financing. The Action Plan contains 6 pillars of which 2 are of primary importance for the legal profession. The first concerns a Regulation rather than a Directive, and secondly, an EU level of supervision in which the EU seeks to establish a supervisory body of which the exact nature is not clear at this stage. The Commission launched a public consultation which was open for feedback. The CCBE submitted a response to the Action Plan and prepared two additional papers which accompanied the CCBE response. These papers focussed on "Efficiency in anti-money laundering regulation - The path to combating the laundering of proceeds of crime effectively", and "Proportionality in anti-money laundering regulation: Balancing the fight against laundering proceeds of crime with protective rights of the citizen". The CCBE is following the various developments relating to the Action Plan in which a number of proposals are expected in the first quarter of 2021.



Brexit

Chair: Margarete VON GALEN (CCBE First Vice-President)

Throughout the year, the Brexit Task Force discussed, coordinated, and assessed the consequences of the UK's withdrawal from the EU on the free movement of lawyers, citizens' rights, and cross-border relations, as well as the future CCBE membership of the UK delegation.

Company Law

Chair: Antigoni ALEXANDROPOULOU (Greece)

This year, a part of its work focused on the impact of COVID-19 measures in the area of company law, and, for example, prepared a letter for the European Commission regarding the need to extend the deadline for European Companies to hold their general meetings as this could only be enacted at EU level. The Committee continued to monitor the implementation of the EU company law directives (use of digital tools and cross border mobility). It also contributed to provide its feedback as part of the gathering of information in the context of a study “on the relevance and impact of artificial intelligence for company law and corporate governance” by the European Commission. It has also updated its previous questionnaire about the potential effects of Brexit in company law in light of the latest developments.



Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Chair: Alix FRANK-THOMASSER (Austria)



The Committee had many discussions on gender equality in the legal profession and relevant developments within national Bars and Law Societies, as well as, in particular, within the CCBE. The Committee is following developments regarding recommendations which were sent to the CCBE Statutes Committee. The Committee also followed a number of issues regarding Business and Human Rights, including a paper from the Fundamental Rights Agency concerning ‘Business-related human rights abuse reported in the EU and available remedies. The Committee also commenced a response to a Commission consultation

on Sustainable Corporate Governance.

COVID-19 Task Force

Chair: Margarete VON GALEN (CCBE First Vice-President)

The COVID-19 Taskforce was created in spring to consider the impact of COVID-19 on the legal profession and the judiciary in general. In parallel, different CCBE committees continued to work on COVID-19 related topics in their specific fields of competence. Following the questionnaire which was circulated on the issues identified as urgent regarding the implications of COVID-19 on the legal profession, the Task Force worked on a paper on the reactivation of justice after the first lockdown in June.

In general, several questionnaires, statements, and other papers on the topic of COVID-19 were made by different Committees. All this information and various documents adopted by the Bars and Law Societies at national level were made available on the CCBE COVID-19 website – as well as papers and positions adopted by different institutions at both EU and international level. The CCBE COVID-19 website is still regularly being updated.



Criminal Law

Chair: Ondrej LACIAK (Slovak Republic)



The Committee was delighted to commence the year in February with a meeting with the Fundamental Rights Agency. In March and April, meetings took place with representatives from the Parliament regarding the European Arrest Warrant. In June, the Committee had fruitful exchanges with specialists from the Criminal Law team of the German Presidency. In October the Committee was delighted to welcome a representative from the Fundamental Rights Agency who spoke to the CCBE about the FRA work on the Presumption of Innocence. In November the Committee was delighted to welcome a representative from Fair Trials who informed the Committee of the work of Fair Trials regarding Alternatives to detention.

Deontology / Towards a Model Code of Conduct

Chair: Bertrand DEBOSQUE (France)

Vice-Chair: Nick FLUCK (United Kingdom)



At the beginning of the year, the former Model Code of Conduct Committee was transformed into a subgroup and remerged into the Deontology Committee. Most of the meetings organised this year were joint meetings with, however, a specific focus on the work on the Model Code of Conduct. The other topics discussed within the Committee and subgroup mainly concerned requests related to the application of the CCBE Code of Conduct and requests for support made by certain members in the context of national developments affecting the legal profession.

As regards the Model Code of Conduct, great progress was made during the year to finalise the work on the remaining articles. The fourth model article – the model article on relations with clients – was approved by the CCBE Plenary Session in November; the draft model article on relations between lawyers and the draft model article on fees are also now ready to be submitted to the next Standing Committee in February 2021 for preliminary approval.

The model articles and the preamble, which is currently being prepared, will form part of a Model Code of Conduct which should serve as a basis of inspiration for Bars and Law Societies when reviewing national rules of conduct. Three model articles, the model articles on confidentiality, conflict of interest and independence, were already adopted in 2016 and 2017.

The whole Model Code of Conduct will be submitted for approval to the Plenary Session in May 2021.



EU Lawyers

Chair: Hugh MERCER QC (United Kingdom)

Vice Chairs: Aldo BULGARELLI (Italy), Michael Jürgen WERNER (Germany)

The Committee continued its work on promoting the free movement of lawyers through the sharing of information and best practices in the application of the Lawyers' directives within the EU/EEA, and on facilitating and maintaining good cooperation and assistance between Bars and Law Societies across Europe. All members are invited to share their practical queries and experience on free movement of lawyers in the meetings of the Committee. In this regard, the CCBE position on "interpretation issue in

relation to free movement of lawyers" was adopted this year. In addition, the Committee updated and revised the FML guide (which first edition was adopted in 2016).

Finally, the Committee generally followed matters related to EU competition law developments impacting the legal profession and drafted the adopted CCBE comments as part of a Commission's initiative for a new competition tool.

European Convention on the Profession of Lawyer

Chair: Laurent PETTITI (France)

Vice-Chair: François MOYSE (Luxembourg)

A CCBE Working Group is specifically devoted to the issue of a European Convention following the adoption of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe recommendation calling the Committee of Ministers to draft and adopt a Convention on the Profession of Lawyer in January 2018. The Working Group works in close cooperation with the key actors at Council of Europe level, develops strategy to raise awareness on the need for a Convention and coordinates the initiatives to be taken by Bars and Law Societies at national level. On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the UN Basic Principles on the role of lawyers, the CCBE issued a joint statement supported by more than 60 National and International Bars and lawyers' organisations calling for a more effective application of the guarantees provided by the UN Basic Principles on the role of lawyers and reiterating our strong support to the work carried out by the Council of Europe on a future European Convention on the profession of lawyer.





European Private Law

Chair: Pedro PORTELLANO (Spain)

The European Private Law (EPL) Committee continued the discussions on the liability issues of AI and in this regard provided its input to the drafting of “the CCBE Considerations on the legal aspects of Artificial Intelligence” and “the CCBE Response to the consultation on the European Commission’s White Paper on Artificial Intelligence”.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee drafted a set of “CCBE considerations on change of circumstances legislation”. This paper provides some guidance on the application of the hardship clause (formerly known as “rebus sic stantibus”) in a situation, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, where commercial activities have stopped, and contracts cannot be fulfilled.

During the year, the EPL Committee also worked on the responses to several other public consultations of the European Commission, in particular the one on the EU’s possible accession to the HCCH Judgments Convention, but also regarding the New Consumer Agenda. Moreover, the Committee discussed some of the aspects of the forthcoming Digital Services Act and contributed to the preparation of the CCBE response to the public consultation on this issue.

European Transparency Register

Chair: Jean-Louis JORIS (Belgium)

Throughout the year, the European Transparency Register Working Group was in contact with the European Parliament and the European Commission as regards the proposal for a mandatory European Transparency Register. In its interventions, the CCBE underlined the need for better legal definitions, monitoring procedures, and due process regarding disciplinary proceedings (for example, by establishing an independent body to rule on alleged violations and an appeal procedure).



Family & Succession Law

Chair: Katell DROUET-BASSOU (France)

Vice-Chair: Marina BLITZ (Belgium)

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Family and Succession Law Committee held several meetings dedicated to the impact of COVID-19 in the field of family of law, in particular during the first lockdown when the opening of the courts was rather limited everywhere in Europe and many problems occurred as regards taking of decisions and their enforcement (especially in cross-border situations).

A bulletin on this topic has been prepared for approval next year.

Moreover, the Committee continued to follow the developments in the field of parentage/surrogacy at international level, and the developments relating to the protection of vulnerable adults. Most recently, the Committee also worked on the response to the Commission’s public consultation on the EU Strategy on the rights of the child (2021-2024).

Future of the Legal Profession and Legal Services

Chair: Thierry WICKERS (France)

Vice Chair: Christian LEMKE (Germany)

The Future Committee has been following developments regarding the use of AI and its impact on the legal and judicial practice, with the IT law committee, leading to the adoption of various CCBE publications. The Committee continued to consider and assess the impact of innovation and technology on the justice systems, the role of lawyers in our society, the need for our core values, and how the legal profession and its organisations could possibly adapt to be an essential part of this future. This year, the Committee devoted part of its activities to finalise an additional report dealing with the impact of AI for the legal practice, and to analyse current challenges as a result of the COVID-19 situation for the future of lawyers and justice.





Human Rights

Chair: Stefan VON RAUMER (Germany)

In addition to the CCBE Human Rights Award ([see Highlights](#)), the CCBE continues to act in support of lawyers being harassed, threatened, imprisoned, or even murdered because of their professional activities. In 2020, the CCBE has sent over 110 letters to national authorities in cases where lawyers have been victims of human rights violations in 36 different countries. The situation is particularly worrying in Belarus, China, Egypt, Iran and Turkey. Regarding the situation of lawyers in Belarus, Colombia, Iran, and Turkey, the CCBE also issued with other bars, law societies and lawyers associations, several Joint Statements in support of endangered lawyers in those countries (available [here](#)).

More specifically regarding the worrying situation of the legal profession in Turkey, the CCBE organised a webinar with representatives of the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the Union of Turkish Bar Associations and the Istanbul Bar Association ([see Highlights](#)).

Furthermore, the CCBE has further strengthened its links with the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations, in particular with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Independence of judges and lawyers and the UN Human Rights Regional Representative for Europe, in order to highlight the attacks on lawyers worldwide and the need to protect them. The CCBE is also strengthening its cooperation with its “Defence of the Defenders” Network as well as with Human Rights NGOs to achieve synergies in support of persecuted lawyers.

Insurance

Chair: Herman BUYSENS (Belgium)

As regards the area of legal expenses insurance, the Committee continued its work for a better understanding of the free choice of lawyer principle, taking into account a recent ruling by the Court of Justice. In this regard, the Committee initiated a dialogue with the representatives of the Legal Protection International (International Association of Legal Expenses Insurance (ex-RIAD)) and intends to follow up on this next year.



The Committee analysed possible issues with lawyers’ professional indemnity insurance in cross-border practices and decided to update its previous survey conducted in 2015. It also monitored the European Commission policy work with a study in preparation analysing the national requirements regarding professional indemnity insurance for legal providers and their potential impact on the functioning of the single market.



International Legal Services (ILS)

Chair: Carlo FORTE (Italy)

In January the Committee was delighted to welcome representatives from the European Commission who discussed EU/UK related matters. In February, representatives from the CCBE had a meeting with representatives from the UNCITRAL Secretariat. There was a very evident desire from both the CCBE and UNCITRAL representatives to continue the relationship. During the year the ILS Committee also had a meeting with the Commission regarding the WTO Multi-Party Interim Appeal Arbitration Arrangement (MPIA). The Committee was also delighted to meet with Pascal Kerneis (Managing Director, European Services Forum (ESF)) who updated the committee on the various trade negotiations, digital trade and data flows, Mutual Recognition Agreements and perspectives on wider issues related to trade agreements.

During 2020, CCBE delegations approved an information package containing papers on the legal status of third country lawyers (Foreign Legal Consultant) rules in each EU Member State and in the UK, a paper on a Model Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) on legal services, a paper on the international exchange of information among Bars and Law Societies according to GDPR rules and a Committee Note on a Regulatory basis for legal services in the EU-UK Partnership Agreement.

IT Law

Chair: Jiří NOVÁK (Czech Republic)
Vice-Chair: Carla SECCHIERI (Italy)



The IT Law Committee took a leading role in the drafting of the “CCBE considerations on the Legal Aspects of AI” as well as the “CCBE Response to the consultation on the European Commission’s White Paper on Artificial Intelligence”. Throughout the year, the Committee worked on an assessment regarding possible CCBE actions on the protection of lawyers’ use of cloud services. The Committee also extensively interacted with the EU institutions regarding the policy proposals in the field of e-justice, including the Me-CODEX project, and prepared a set of “CCBE comments on the roadmap on the digitalisation of justice in the EU”. Various members of the IT Law Committee also took part in the joint CCBE/ELF project called “AI4Lawyers” which aims to provide a better understanding for European lawyers and law firms regarding the use of AI and other novel IT technologies in their daily practice. The Committee also prepared the CCBE response to the European Commission Consultation on the European Data Strategy, and followed the legislative developments concerning the proposal for amending the regulations on service of documents and the taking of evidence in civil and commercial matters.

Migration

Chair: David CONLAN SMYTH (Ireland)
Vice-Chair: Noemí ALARCÓN VELASCO (Spain)



The Migration Committee closely follows the developments in the area of migration at national and EU level. In particular this year, the Migration Committee has closely followed the situation at the Greek Turkish border and urged the EU institutions to take all the necessary measures to take all necessary measures to protect the life and safeguards the fundamental rights of endangered human beings. At

EU level, the Migration Committee is actively working on the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, published by the European Commission in September 2020, to ensure the effective application of fundamental rights and procedural safeguards in this area.

The Migration committee experts also actively participated in high level online meetings such as the EASO consultative Forum and several meetings with the EU Parliament to discuss the New Pact on Migration and Asylum.

The Migration committee furthermore followed and supported the European Lawyers in Lesvos initiative (ELIL), launched by the CCBE and the German Bar Association (DAV) in 2016 and later joined by the CNB in 2020 and which is now managed by an independent non-profit charitable organisation. ELIL still needs funding, on a permanent basis in order to be able to continue offering independent pro bono legal advice to asylum seekers.

[See donation page.](#)

PECO (Platform for Exchange, Cooperation and Outreach)

Chair: Stanislav Balík until February - Roman Završek (Slovenia) from February
Vice chairs: Marc JOBERT (France), Constantin PARASCHO (Romania), Maria ŚLAŻAK (Poland)



The PECO continued to monitor and assess the development of advocacy in different countries, and provided assistance and organised exchanges between members on requests received and issues raised, therefore strengthening relationships with associate and observer members of the CCBE. In particular, a proposal accompanied with a detailed analysis was prepared to file an *amicus curiae* brief in the constitutional case on the abolition of several provisions in the Law on Advocates of Georgia (constitutional case *Lasha Janibegashvili* vs. the Parliament of Georgia). The case concerned the question whether lawyers’ activities could be considered as entrepreneurial activities as a result of which the Georgian Bar Association would be undertaking a monopolistic entrepreneurial activity, thereby violating the freedom of enterprise which is guaranteed by the Constitution of Georgia.

Informal contacts were further developed with the Bar Association of the Republic Azerbaijan. After the official request received at the end of March 2019 expressing their interest to become an observer member of the CCBE, the assessment of the Azerbaijani Bar Association as a potential observer member was continued in 2020. In this regard, several rounds of discussion within the PECO, with the Azerbaijani Bar Association as well as other relevant actors took place in 2020.



Permanent Delegation to the Court of Justice and the General Court of the European Union and the EFTA Court (PD LUX)

Chair: Cesare RIZZA (Italy)

On 27 January 2020, meetings took place between the CCBE and members of the Court of Justice, General Court and European Free Trade Association States Court (EFTA Court). Such meetings allow practitioners to bring concerns, compliments and suggestions to the Courts. The meetings also allow practitioners to understand the goals, ambitions and restrictions of possible issues and requests.

On 4 September CCBE delegations approved a CCBE position paper regarding the functioning of the General Court in the wake of the 2015 Reform. The CCBE position paper was a contribution to the ongoing debate on the Reform of the judicial framework of the Court of Justice of the European Union as it contains comments on the efficiency of the General Court, the necessity and effectiveness of the increase to 54 Judges, and the further establishment of specialised chambers and/or other structural changes. The CCBE paper was prepared in order to contribute to discussions in light of the requirement for the Court of Justice to prepare a report on the functioning of the General Court before the end of 2020.

Permanent Delegation to the European Court of Human Rights (PD STRAS)

Chair: Piers GARDNER (UK)

After the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) consulted the CCBE on a proposed amendment of its Rules relating to the conduct of applicant's representatives, the Permanent Delegation to the European Court of Human Rights (PD Stras) in collaboration with the PECO and Deontology Committees proposed some changes to the proposed amendment of Rules 36 and 44 of the Rules of Court of the ECtHR to clarify the text and to ensure that a due process is assured.

On 13 November 2020, based on its Proposals for reform of the ECHR machinery adopted in June 2019, the CCBE adopted its Proposals to DH-SYSC-V on enhancing the national implementation of the ECHR and the execution of judgments of the ECtHR. These proposals constitute CCBE's input to the draft guidelines discussed at the first meeting of the Drafting Group on enhancing the national implementation of the system of the European Convention on Human Rights (DH-SYSC-V) in which the Chair of PD Stras represented the CCBE.

The Chair of PD Stras has also represented the CCBE in the exchange of views with civil society organised by the CDDH ad hoc negotiation Group on the accession of the EU on to the ECHR ("47+1 Group").

The CCBE also published an updated version of its guide: "The European Court of Human Rights: Questions & Answers for Lawyers".

Due to COVID19 situation the annual bilateral meeting with the ECtHR could not take place this year.



Quality

Chair: Aldo BULGARELLI (Italy)

The quality subgroup was set up with the purpose of collecting and preparing some guidance and tools for assisting bars and law societies in their essential role of ensuring a high-level quality of legal services and an independent profession. During this year, part of the activities was therefore devoted to the preparation of such an analysis and a forthcoming paper.

The Quality subgroup, in conjunction with EU lawyers committee, has also followed the European Commission policy works with a study in preparation on the 'Behavioural economic analysis of professionals' incentives in business services professions' which scope covers the legal profession. The study's objective is to collect evidence on the efficacy of different regulatory measures in achieving public interest objectives.

Statutes Review

Chair: Anne Birgitte GAMMELJORD (Denmark)

The Statutes Review Working Group assessed and considered any necessary amendments and updates to the CCBE Statutes. In order to take into account on the one hand the withdrawal of the UK from the EU, and, on the other hand, to keep the UK delegation as a member of the CCBE, it drafted the necessary statutory provisions for the creation of a new form of membership, i.e. affiliate member. This new membership status was adopted during the November Plenary Session and allows the UK delegation to remain active within the CCBE, with certain restrictions, in particular on matters relating to EU policies.



Surveillance

Chair: Iain G. MITCHELL, QC (United Kingdom)



This year the Surveillance Working Group again extensively dealt with the various international legislative developments concerning governmental access to electronic evidence in cross-border criminal matters. It closely monitored and interacted with the EU institutions on the proposal for an EU Regulation on European Production and Preservation Orders for electronic evidence in criminal matters, and the EU-US negotiations on cross border access to e-evidence. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic,

the Working Group prepared a CCBE Statement on COVID-19 contact tracing apps, and issued a “CCBE Guidance on the use of remote working tools by lawyers and remote court proceedings” which analyses the main risks and challenges regarding the use of remote working tools by lawyers, especially in relation to fundamental rights, professional secrecy, and GDPR compliance. The same paper also provides important recommendations regarding remote court proceedings in order to ensure that the right to a fair trial is respected.

Tax

Chair: Jacques TAQUET (France)

In 2020, the Committee followed the implementation of the DAC 6 Directive which had to be adopted by Member States before 31 December 2019. DAC 6 refers to Council Directive (EU) 2018/822 amending Directive 2011/16/EU as regards mandatory automatic exchange of information in the field of taxation in relation to reportable cross-border arrangements. The Directive imposes mandatory reporting of cross-border arrangements. The Committee compiled an overview of DAC 6 implementation in the different Member States regarding the professional secrecy/legal professional privilege aspects.



Following the support of the CCBE delegations, the CCBE also intervened in a Constitutional challenge by the Belgian Bars against certain provisions in the Belgian national legislation implementing the DAC 6 Directive. The CCBE challenge focusses on provisions concerning legal professional privilege/professional secrecy. The challenge also contains a request to send a preliminary reference to the Court of Justice of the European Union. A CCBE intervention at the level of the Belgian Constitutional Court would also allow the CCBE to intervene in proceedings before the Court of Justice of the European Union, should such a preliminary reference be made by the Belgian Constitutional Court.

Training

Chair: Pier Giovanni TRAVERSA (Italy) until June - Nikolaos KOUTKIAS (Greece) from July



The Training Committee focussed on assessing the training systems of lawyers, and monitored and provided advice on the finalisation of the REFOTRA project regarding the facilitation of recognition of continuing legal education. The Committee also discussed the challenges regarding the training of lawyers during the COVID-19 pandemic, and prepared the CCBE contribution for the next EU policy on judicial training. Following the European Commission’s adoption of the European judicial training strategy for 2021-2024 and launch of the test phase of the European Training Platform for lawyers (an

online search tool of training courses and self-learning material), the Committee organised a presentation and exchange on these initiatives.

In February 2020 the Academy of European Law (ERA) hosted the Young Lawyers Contest in cooperation with the CCBE and the Warsaw Bar Association. 31 contestants from 17 countries were selected and grouped into teams of mixed nationalities. The CCBE was represented in the jury by the chair of the Company Law committee, Antigoni Alexandropoulou. The winning team of competition consisted of 3 young lawyers: Olivia Vansteelant from Belgium, Anu Vuori from Finland and Ognyan Yankov from Bulgaria. [More information.](#)

Relations with the Council of Europe

As an observer member of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ), the CCBE closely followed the work and interacted with the working groups on Evaluation of judicial systems, Quality of justice including digital transformations of the judiciary, Cyberjustice and AI used in the field of justice, and Judicial time management. The CCBE also contributed to the work of the Ad hoc committee on AI (CAHAI) regarding the feasibility of a legal framework for the use of AI, as well as the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) concerning guidelines on legal aid schemes. The CCBE also continued to closely monitor the work of the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) on the work carried out by the Council of Europe for a European Convention on the profession of Lawyer. Furthermore, the CCBE continued to actively follow the work of the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) such as the CDDH Drafting Group on migration and human rights (CDDH-MIG) and the Committee of Experts on the system of the European Convention on Human Rights (DH-SYSC). In particular, the CCBE adopted [Proposals to DH-SYSC-V on enhancing the national implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights and the execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights \(13/11/2020\)](#).

Moreover, the CCBE is also closely involved in the Human Rights Education for Legal Profession Program (HELP). The CCBE is a member of the Conference of International Non-governmental Organisations (INGOs). And last but not least, the European Court of Human Rights and the CCBE have established and maintained a constructive cooperation for many years.



C | Projects

The projects described below are all financed in part by the European Union and have been carried out in partnership with the European Lawyers' Foundation (ELF). More information about the ELF can be found [here](#).

Artificial Intelligence for Lawyers (AI4Lawyers)



This project started in April 2020 and has a duration of 24 months. The project's objective is to provide a better understanding for lawyers and small and medium-sized law firms on how to use the opportunities provided by new technologies, such as conversational systems which can open up new service channels to clients. This year the project team prepared through an extensive questionnaire a detailed overview of the "average state of the art" IT capabilities of lawyers and law firms in the EU and a gap analysis using comparisons with other non-EU countries (which was initiated this year). In the course of 2021, the project will undertake an assessment of the opportunities and barriers in the use of natural language processing tools in small and medium-sized law practices; and develop guidance for EU lawyers and law firms on the use of AI in legal practice.

A more detailed project description can be found on the following dedicated [CCBE webpage](#).

EVIDENCE2e-CODEX (Linking EVIDENCE into e-CODEX for EIO and MLA procedures in Europe)

This project, which started in March 2018, aimed at facilitating and encouraging international cooperation in the criminal sector between the involved Member State authorities by improving the conditions for a secure and fast exchange of electronic evidence in the EU. In pursuit of this objective the project developed a uniform theoretical framework for the easy and reliable exchange of electronic evidence in the specific context of the European Investigation Order in criminal matters (EIO) and Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) Procedures. The project consortium included 17 partners from 10 different countries. Amongst the partners are representatives of different law families, including INTERPOL and six Member State's Ministries of Justice as well as the CCBE through the European Lawyers Foundation. At the beginning of the year, the project held its final conference with the active participation of the CCBE in the coordination of a panel discussion on the challenges the different legal professions are facing as regards the digitalisation of criminal justice.



Me-CODEX (Maintenance of e-CODEX)

The CCBE continued its participation in the Me-CODEX project which aims to maintain the services already developed by e-CODEX, until it is delivered (most probably) to an EU agency and to pave the way for the long-term usage and sustainable governance of the e-CODEX building blocks. Under the e-CODEX project, electronic building blocks have been developed to establish a European interoperability layer for e-Justice communications, thus enabling electronic access to different Member States' judicial systems in different domains, such as the European small claims procedure or the European Payment Order. In this project the CCBE developed, through Find a Lawyer 2 (FAL 2), a mechanism to verify lawyers' e-ID in proceedings developed under e-CODEX. As regards Me-CODEX II (which started in July 2019 as a prolongation of Me-CODEX), the CCBE/ELF was invited to participate in the Management Board meetings so that it is well positioned to provide input in the overall governance of e-CODEX, both regarding the currently ongoing activities and in relation to the long-term sustainability of e-CODEX. The CCBE has also been tasked to lead the work of the project's Legal subgroup, which deals with all the legal issues, particularly concerning the compliance with the GDPR and other statutory requirements.

REFOTRA

The REFOTRA project (Recognition of foreign training activities for lawyers) was finalised in June 2020.

This project was divided into 3 phases.

In the margins of the Phase 1 the [Assessment report](#) on the situation in EU and EEA Member States regarding recognition of foreign training was prepared based on questionnaire.

The [CCBE recommendations on solutions to facilitate the recognition of cross-border training](#) were approved in July 2019 as a result of the Phase 2.

During the Phase 3 the proposed [certificate template](#) for cross-border CLE training was tested by volunteer Bars, Law Societies and training providers.

As a result, the [Phase 3 evaluation report](#) was prepared with conclusion “.. if individual bars decide to support it, the REFOTRA certificate template is suggested for use to facilitate the recognition of cross-border continuing legal education within the EU”. The CCBE members are invited to use this [certificate template](#) and to circulate it to the training providers, if and where possible, to facilitate the recognition of cross-border continuing legal education.

More information is available [here](#).



6 | Who's who

A | Presidency



Ranko PELICARIĆ
President



Margarete von GALEN
First Vice-President



James MacGUILL
Second Vice-President



Panagiotis PERAKIS
Third Vice-President

B | Finance Committee



Péter SZABÓ
Chair of the Finance Committee
until September



Claudia SEIBEL
Chair of the Finance Committee
from September

C | Committee Chairs



Antigoni ALEXANDRAPOULOU
Company Law



Stanislav BALÍK
until February
PECO



Aldo BULGARELLI
Quality



Herman BUYSENS
Insurance



Alix FRANK-THOMASSER
Corporate Social Responsibility



Anne Birgitte GAMMELJORD
Statutes Review



Piers GARDNER
Permanent Delegation to the ECHR



Jean-Louis JORIS
European Transparency Register



Iain G MITCHELL QC
Surveillance



Jiří NOVÁK
IT Law



Laurent PETTITI
European Convention on
the Profession of Lawyer



Pedro PORTELLANO
European Private Law



Margarete von GALEN
Brexit & COVID-19 Task Force



Stefan von RAUMER
Human Rights



Thierry WICKERS
Future of the Legal Profession
and Legal Services



Roman ZAVRŠEK
from February
PECO



David CONLAN SMYTH
Migration



Bertrand DEBOSQUE
Deontology



Katell DROUET-BASSOU
Family & Succession Law



Carlo FORTE
International Legal Services



Nikolaos KOUTKIAS
from July
Training



Ondrej LACIAK
Criminal Law



Rupert MANHART
Anti-Money-Laundering



Hugh MERCER QC
EU Lawyers



Cesare RIZZA
Permanent Delegation
to the Court of Justice
and the General Court
and the EFTA Court



Elisabeth SCHEUBA
Access to Justice



Jacques TAQUET
Tax



Pier Giovanni TRAVERSA
until June
Training



Philip BUISSERET
Secretary-General
until July



Simone CUOMO
Acting Secretary-General
from July

Legal staff



Stéphanie ALVES
Senior Legal Advisor



Simone CUOMO
Senior Legal Advisor
until July



Peter Mc NAMEE
Senior Legal Advisor



Nathan ROOSBEEK
Legal Advisor



Indra BULE
Legal Advisor



Oona MIKKELÄ
Legal Advisor

Communication



Karine MÉTAYER
Communication Manager

Administrative staff



Véronique JAMART
Office Manager



Alexandre MAHÉ
Translator



Orianne VAN DER LINDEN
Secretary



Sophie TESTAERT
Secretary

We would like to thank our trainees in 2020 :

Inuri ABEYESEKARA, Chiara BERTOZZI, Covadonga CABRERO MARTÍNEZ, Leslie DERMIGNY, Yvonne GOETTLER, Veronica ROBERTSON, Gaétan ROELANTS DU VIVIER, Jared SOFIA, Maria TROFIMOVA, Xinyi WEN

E | Heads of Delegation

Austria	Elisabeth SCHEUBA
Belgium	Eric BALATE
Bulgaria	Ralitsa NEGENTSOVA
Croatia	Irina JELCIC
Cyprus	Doros IOANNIDES (until November) - Christos CLERIDES
Czech Republic	Stanislav BALÍK (until November) - Antonín MOKRÝ
Denmark	Philip S. THORSEN (until September) - Liv DYRHAUGE-KLARGAARD
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Finland	Jarkko RUOHOLA
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Rue Joseph II, 40/8 - B-1000 Brussels
+32 (0)2 234 65 10 | ccbe@ccbe.eu | www.ccbe.eu



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Rue Joseph II, 40/8
B-1000 Bruxelles
T. +32 (0)2 234 65 10
www.ccbe.eu
ccbe@ccbe.eu

Editor : Simone CUOMO, Acting Secretary-General

Coordinator : Karine MÉTAYER

Contributors : Stéphanie ALVES
Indra BULE
Simone CUOMO
Peter Mc NAMEE
Oona MIKKELÄ
Nathan ROOSBEEK

Translator : Alexandre MAHÉ

Layout : Sophie TESTAERT