



Detention, Alternatives, Mutual Trust and Mutual Legal Assistance



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About the project

Prison population rates within the EU still differentiate greatly from Member State to Member State, with the highest numbers still registered in the majority of newer Member States that joined after 2004. There is also a varying picture when it comes to the application of non-custodial sanctions and measures throughout the EU's Member States, with there being a clear need to increase awareness about such alternative measures and their application amongst relevant practitioners in many Member States. This clearly shows that more must be done to demonstrate the effectiveness of relevant EU instruments to reduce prison populations, use pre-trial detention as a measure of last resort and to consider the use of non-custodial sanctions and measures as an alternative. Moreover, a specific need for continuous training for magistrates at all stages of their career on all the mutual recognition instruments covered by this project has been identified, with there especially being a lack of knowledge and experience among practitioners as regards Framework

Decisions 2008/947/JHA on probation and alternative sanctions and 2009/829/JHA on the European Supervision Order (ESO), which is an obstacle to a more frequent application of these instruments.

The project offers a comprehensive overview of EU instruments of mutual legal assistance and mutual legal recognition in the field of deprivation or restriction of liberty, placing them within the wider context of the applicable Council of Europe recommendations and the relevant ECtHR and CJEU judgments, with the aim of facilitating better cross-border cooperation among Member States and raising awareness of alternatives to detention.



Objectives

- Provide judges, prosecutors, lawyers in private practice, prison and probation staff from eligible EU Member States and Candidate Countries the necessary tools to ensure a uniform application of EU law in the field of deprivation or restriction of liberty, alternatives to detention and Council of Europe standards
- Enhance cross-border mutual legal assistance and recognition of decisions within the context of detention and alternatives
- Raise awareness of issues around detention, improving conditions and finding alternatives
- Offer a better understanding and enhanced knowledge of relevant ECtHR and CJEU case-law and their relevance to (legal) practitioners' work within the EU and wider European legal framework
- Offer an exchange of best and promising practice and an exchange of experience in matters relating to the relevant framework decisions
- Create a network between judicial and legal practitioners, as well as prison staff and probation officers throughout the EU and beyond
- Improve the digital skills and exchange ideas and discuss new perspectives on new digital possibilities in areas of common interest through the offering of a blended learning approach (webinars and e-presentations in combination with in-person seminars, presentation of e-tools, databases, etc. in presentations and workshops)
- Train 400 practitioners from all over the EU and eligible Candidate Countries in ten interactive cross-professional training events (five in-person seminars and five webinars)

Partners





Methodology

10 training events (five face-to-face seminars, five webinars) will be offered, each of them focusing on a different topic within the context of enhancing cross-border mutual legal assistance and recognition of decisions in relation to detention and alternatives. Each seminar will consist of a blend of presentations, practical workshops and case studies of best and promising practice. The complementary webinars will focus solely on an introduction to the main EU legal instruments that will be covered during the seminars and how they function, allowing more time during the seminars for in-depth training and analysis.

Additionally, recordings of the webinars and most of the presentations of the seminars will be made publicly available.

About the Academy of European Law (ERA)

We are a centre of expert knowledge and debate in European law that provides you with the opportunity to learn, discuss and network with top speakers about the ever-changing legal framework.

We are a non-profit foundation established in 1992 to serve the European public interest by ensuring that legal practitioners (lawyers in private practice, in-house counsel, judges, prosecutors, court staff, national civil servants, national regulators, staff of the EU institutions and agencies, probation and enforcement officers) across the EU have the necessary knowledge and training to apply EU law.

Now supported by all 27 EU Member States and other stakeholders, we offer face-to-face training events, hybrid training events, online-only training events and distance learning products. Our events are attended by participants from all over Europe.

Find out more and visit us on www.era.int.

Calendar of activities

Face-to face seminars

The face-to-face events will focus on different topics within the context of enhancing cross-border mutual legal assistance and recognition of decisions in relation to detention and alternatives. They will be held in English, as well as Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese and Romanian, depending on the hosting country. Each event will have a duration of 1.5 days. The majority presentations of the seminars will be recorded and made publicly available on the project website.



2025

Strasbourg, 15-16 May	The European Prison Rules as a Standard-Setter for European Prison Conditions	EN	judges, prosecutors, lawyers in private practice, prison and probation staff
Vilnius, 4-5 December	Framework Decisions 829 and 947 and their Impact on Alternatives to Detention	EN LT	judges, prosecutors, lawyers in private practice, prison and probation staff

2026

Krakow, 27-28 April	The EAW, pre-trial detention, mutual trust and legal assistance.	EN PL	for judges, prosecutors and lawyers in private practice
Lisbon, 11-12 May	Framework Decision 909 and its impact on the transfer of prisoners	EN PT	judges, prosecutors, lawyers in private practice and prison staff
Bucharest, 28-29 September	Framework Decisions 829 and 947 and their Impact on Alternatives to Detention	EN RO	judges, prosecutors, lawyers in private practice, prison and probation staff



Webinars

In parallel to the organisation of the face-to-face events, a series of webinars will be implemented that will be of a complimentary nature and will focus solely on an introduction to the main EU legal instruments that will be covered during the seminars and how they function. The 3-hour webinars, which will all only be offered in English, will allow for easy access for anyone interested throughout the EU and the eligible Candidate Countries.



2025

Online
17 June

Framework Decision 829

EN

judges, prosecutors, lawyers in private practice, prison and probation staff

Online,
24 September

Framework Decision 947

EN

judges, prosecutors, lawyers in private practice, prison and probation staff

2026

Online
28 January

European Arrest Warrant (EAW)

EN

judges, prosecutors and lawyers in private practice

Online,
25 February

European Investigation Order (EIO)

EN

judges, prosecutors and lawyers in private practice

Online,
25 March

Framework Decision 909

EN

judges, prosecutors, lawyers in private practice and prison staff

Project website

ERA is implementing the training project under the Justice Programme together with the Council of Europe, Lithuanian Courts Administration, Polish National School of Judiciary and Public Prosecution (KSSiP), Portuguese Centre for Judicial Studies (CEJ), Romanian National Institute of Magistracy (NIM), European Judicial Training Network (EJTN), Confederation of European Probation (CEP), European Organisation of Prison and Correctional Services (EuroPris), Antigone, European Criminal Bar Association (ECBA), European Forum for Restorative Justice (EFRJ), Romanian National Administration of Penitentiaries.

More information about the training activities and free access to the specially developed training materials will be made available on the project website.



Our project in numbers

10

training activities

12

pan-European and
national partners

5

different venues

400

participants trained
(judges, prosecutors,
lawyers, prison and
probation staff)



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How to apply?

General Information on the participation conditions

The number of places available is limited; participation is based on a selection procedure. Interested participants who are judges, prosecutors, lawyers in private practice, prison and probation staff may register directly via ERA or, in the case of judges and prosecutors, via their respective national judicial schools. Participants should be citizens of the EU (except Denmark; Danish citizens are not eligible for funding under the Justice Programme), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Moldova or Ukraine. Please note that different terms apply depending on the type of activity (face-to-face or online). The concrete conditions for participation in each training activity can be found on the project's website.

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Travel, accommodation and catering

The training programme is co-funded by the European Union. For the face-to-face events, participants need to pay a moderate fee after their registration has been approved and they receive an invoice from ERA. ERA will cover the travel costs and accommodation up to a certain amount, and participants will receive a fixed contribution towards their travel and accommodation expenses after the seminar. Beverages consumed during the event, lunch, and dinner are offered by the organisers, and no per diem will be offered for the participants. Participants must book their own travel and accommodation and will receive the contribution after the seminar. The condition for reimbursement is to sign all attendance sheets at the event (daily). Please note that no payment is possible if the registered participant cancels their participation for any reason. The amount of the travel and accommodation cost contribution will be determined by the EU unit cost calculation guidelines for each seminar based on the distance from the participant's place of work to the seminar location and will not take account of the participant's actual travel and accommodation costs.

More information about the seminar series and free access to the specially developed training materials will be made available on the project website.



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