



THE EUROPEAN LAWYERS FOUNDATION: AN ORGANISATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF BARS AND LAWYERS OF THE EU

What is the European Lawyers Foundation?

The European Lawyers Foundation (ELF) is headquartered in The Hague, The Netherlands. It was established by the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) in 2014.

ELF's objective is to undertake projects that relate to the exercise of the profession of lawyers, the development of the law and practice pertaining to the rule of law and administration of justice and substantive developments in the law itself, both at a European and international level. ELF works mainly in two areas:

A) European projects: these are projects implemented within the EU, and mostly funded by the European Union. They cover a broad spectrum of issues: from training lawyers in different areas of law to drafting studies on important EU instruments.

B). External projects: these are focused on issues related to the profession (for example, our projects funded by the International Bar Association in Ukraine and Kazakhstan on improving the quality of legal services in these countries) and to issues on the rule of Law (such as our project on re-establishing the rule of law in Venezuela).

Why is ELF useful for bars and lawyers?

ELF develops work that is useful for bars and lawyers. For instance, ELF helps bars to use EU funds for the implementation of projects. Often, bars have never used EU funds, and so ELF gives bars the opportunity to, say, organise training courses on EU law at a reduced price (since EU funds cover part of the costs). ELF also helps translate bars' ideas into reality with the support of EU funds. For instance, ELF helped the Paris Bar in the preparation of a project on the training of lawyers on children's rights. In this project, ELF put its expertise at the service of the Paris Bar, helping it not just in drafting the project proposal and budget but also in acquiring the partners (other bars). The project was successfully awarded funds by the European Commission.

The work undertaken by ELF also creates added value for individual lawyers. Lawyers benefit from the training organised by ELF on various topics, and they can also access training material and publications made freely available on ELF's website. More importantly, ELF offers significant networking opportunities between participating lawyers in our many projects, we always dedicate enough time to allow interaction between the participating lawyers from different EU Member States.

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Some practical examples of ELF's work

TRALIM - a project focused on training at least 130 lawyers from 5 different EU Member States on the EU law relating to asylum and immigration, through the organisation of four seminars in four countries (Spain, Greece, Ireland and Italy), with participating lawyers from the project partners. The project covers 80% of the total costs of the project (organisation of the seminars, travel and accommodation costs for some lawyers to attend the seminars in other countries, etc).

TRAVAW - a project that aims to train 210 lawyers on the law regarding violence against women in 7 jurisdictions (Spain, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Poland, Northern Ireland, and England and Wales). This project will also cover 80% of the total costs, and so it allows lawyers to attend high quality seminars at a reduced rate.

TRAINAC - a research project on the 3 EU directives on the rights of suspected or accused persons in criminal proceedings (right to translation and interpretation, right to information and right of access to a lawyer), which produced the first comprehensive study about these directives in almost all EU jurisdictions from the perspective of the defence. The project was implemented jointly with the CCBE.

EAW-Rights - a research project undertaken in collaboration with the CCBE focused on the implementation of the European Arrest Warrant from a defence perspective in all EU jurisdictions (except for Romania).

Venezuela - a project run by ELF in co-operation with Venezuelan lawyers, targeting the creation of an action plan that contains measures to assist the re-establishment of the rule of law in Venezuela.

How ELF works

ELF is composed of three bodies (Board of Directors, Supervisory Board and Advisory Board) . The bodies are composed of lawyers from different EU jurisdictions, representing national bars. The work of ELF is undertaken by a permanent Secretariat.

Most of ELF's activity is financed by EU funds. In addition, ELF receives funds from other organisations to undertake specific projects or to cover running costs. Invaluable help has been provided by the Municipality of the City of The Hague, as well as by bars such as the French Conseil National des Barreaux and Conference des Batonniers, as well as the Barreau de Paris, the Spanish Bar, the Barcelona Bar and the Dutch Bar (which hosts ELF in its own premises).

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