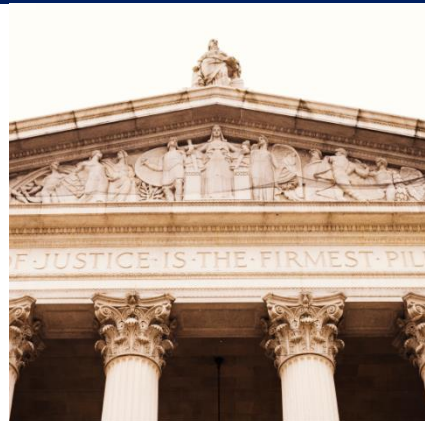


# Council of Europe/EJTN Thematic seminar and course launch – Judges Upholding the Rule of Law



## JUDGES UPHOLDING THE RULE OF LAW

**HELP**  
Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals  
Council of Europe



**Seminar date: 17-18 December 2024**

**Course duration: 2 months**

**Format: thematic seminar followed by online tutored  
course**

**Open to: judges and prosecutors from EU MS**

**Language: English**

**Council of Europe/EJTN HELP Certificates delivered for  
successful participants**

**Organised by the Council of Europe in cooperation with  
the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN)**

Participation in this training contributes to the goal set by EU **Judicial Training Strategy** of training legal professionals, on EU law, by 2024.

## Thematic Seminar and Course Launch

### Judges Upholding the Rule of Law

#### *Concept paper and Agenda*

<b>Date</b>	17-18 December 2024
<b>Location</b>	Online and face-to-face in Room 10, Palais de L'Europe (Strasbourg, France)
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Participation</b>	Judges and prosecutors from EU MS

### Background

The **Council of Europe (CoE) Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP)**<sup>1</sup> supports the CoE member states in implementing European human rights standards at the national level, focusing on the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), the European Social Charter, other key CoE instruments, and, since 2015, relevant EU legal framework. This is done by raising the capacities of professionals to apply those instruments in their daily work.

The objective of HELP is to provide high quality education on human rights to judges, prosecutors and lawyers throughout Europe, and beyond. Law enforcement authorities such as police and prison staff may also be targeted by HELP. Thanks to HELP courses, legal professionals can better protect human rights on a national level and keep up to date with the ever-evolving standards and case law of the European Courts: the European Court of Human Rights and the Court of Justice of the EU. HELP courses specifically designed for EU countries increasingly incorporate relevant EU legal content.

HELP's three pillars are:

1. A European **Network** of national training institutions for judges, prosecutors and lawyers in the 46 CoE member states, and beyond.
2. **Free online courses on human rights** hosted on an e-learning platform.
3. A human rights **training methodology** for (mainly) legal professionals.

The **European Judicial Training Network (EJTN)**<sup>2</sup> brings together judicial training institutions from all EU member states to pursue an aim of general European interest: developing and implementing training and exchange activities for members of the European judiciary. These activities cover both initial and continuous training/ EJTN's fields of interest include EU, civil, criminal and commercial law and linguistics and societal issues training. The vision of EJTN is to help to foster a common legal and judicial European culture.

EJTN develops training standards and curricula, coordinates judicial training exchanges and programmes, disseminates training expertise and promotes cooperation between EU judicial training institutions.

<sup>1</sup> For more information on HELP please visit HELP's website: [www.coe.int/help](http://www.coe.int/help)

<sup>2</sup> For more information on EJTN please visit EJTN's website: [About us - EJTN](http://www.ejtn.eu)

EJTN's mandate is to help build a genuine European area of justice and to promote knowledge of legal systems, thereby enhancing the understanding, confidence and cooperation between judges and prosecutors within EU states.

## The EU-CoE HELP “Judicial Training on Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights” Project (RoL Frights)

The joint EU-CoE HELP Judicial Training on Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights Project is funded by the European Union's Justice Programme (2014-2020) and implemented by the CoE from November 2022 to November 2024.

The objective of this EU-CoE Project is to contribute to the effective and coherent application of European law in the areas of rule of law, criminal law and fundamental rights, as enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and in the European Convention on Human Rights. To achieve this objective, it is intended to strengthen the capacity of EU justice institutions (multipliers) and the knowledge and skills of justice professionals. In addition, the project aims to strengthen the HELP network in the EU and the capacity of network members to effectively implement the HELP methodology and courses.

### The Thematic Seminar

The seminar will provide a comprehensive overview of the relevant standards, case law and good practices, stemming from the CoE and the EU frameworks. It aims also to create a forum for practical exchange among judges on principles, best practice and challenges. The theme will be examined from the perspective of the human rights protection and the impact on the rule of law and will address connections with the judicial ethics, performance and transparency. In order to deepen their discussions and follow up on the exchanges, the group of participants will continue with the implementation of the HELP course on Ethics for Judges, tutored by an international expert.

The **thematic seminar will be held in Strasbourg, France**. The travel and accommodation of participants will be covered by the Council of Europe. The event will include a series of presentations, aimed at providing the participants with background information and motivate them to follow the course. The working language will be **English**.

## The HELP/EJTN course on Judges Upholding the Rule of Law

The **rule of law is a fundamental value** in the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe (CoE) and **judges are crucial in upholding it both at the national level and across the continent**. To foster a common judicial culture, promote judicial independence, and ensure the efficient and ethical administration of justice, it is vital to enhance dialogue and shared understanding among European judges.

Building upon the 2021 Council of the EU Conclusions "Boosting Training of Justice Professionals", the European Commission entrusted the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN) with organising a forum to foster dialogue among judges, facilitating exchanges on topics related to the rule of law as well as the integrity, accountability, and independence of the judiciary. The first such forum took place in 2022, being followed by the EJTN 2023 judges@europe forum.



This 2023 forum, hosted by the Siracusa International Institute for Criminal Justice and Human Rights, gathered more than 80 judges and experts from key institutions, bodies and associations at the EU level. The diverse sessions and workshops focused on the good administration of justice from three different angles, all of which relate to the rule of law: accountability through disciplinary and liability regimes; accountability through performance and performance control; and accountability through transparency.

The HELP course on Judges Upholding the Rule of Law was born from the commitment of the Council of Europe and the EJTN to share with a broader audience the expertise, insights, and outcomes from the EJTN 2023 judges@europe forum. This course aims at promoting and enhancing the dialogue among judges on the rule of law and the development of a common judicial culture in Europe. Furthermore, the course strengthens the shared understanding of key aspects of the rule of law and judicial independence as well as the good administration of justice and increased demand for judges' accountability in the digital era.

This HELP course was developed in 2024 by the Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) Programme of the Council of Europe, in close cooperation with the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN). Elaborated using the HELP methodology, the course explores different topics in a practical way by using presentations, interactive screens, knowledge tests and reflective exercises, enabling the users to apply the gained knowledge and skills.

## Course outline

The course has an introductory module and 3 substantive modules:

<b>0</b>	<b>Introductory module</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About the course</li> <li>• For whom and by whom</li> <li>• Learning objectives</li> <li>• Resources</li> <li>• Structure</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<b>Judicial Accountability and Ethics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judicial ethics</li> <li>• Discipline vs judicial ethics</li> <li>• Disciplinary regimes</li> <li>• Judicial immunity</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>Performance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital tools in the administration of justice</li> <li>• Judicial leaders and judicial management</li> <li>• Judicial time management</li> <li>• AI and efficiency</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>Transparency</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judicial associations</li> <li>• AI and open data in justice</li> <li>• Freedom of expression of judicial officers</li> <li>• Privacy and declarations of interest</li> </ul>

## The course preparation and implementation

Before the event, participants should create an account on the [HELP e-learning platform](https://help.elearning.ext.coe.int/login/signup.php)

For creating your HELP account, please follow these steps:

- go to this link and fill in the form (it takes about 2 mins): <https://help.elearning.ext.coe.int/login/signup.php>
- once submitted, you will receive an activation link on the email you used for creating the account
- go to your email inbox and click on the link to activate your account.



During event, the participants will be registered on their course page, prepared in advance by their tutors. Over the following weeks and based on the planning set by the tutor, the participants will go through the **online course**, complemented by the additional materials and resources prepared by the tutor.

The participants who have successfully completed the course and passed the evaluation set by the tutors will receive **certificates issued by the HELP Programme of the Council of Europe and the EJTN**.

## Registration

Interested participants should:

- be available to **attend the launch event** (in person or online)
- undertake to **follow and complete the online tutored course** in the following 2 months (approx. 1-2 hours of work per week)
- **have the necessary knowledge of English** to follow the launch event and the online course
- have a laptop/tablet/smartphone available for accessing the HELP e-learning platform

Selected participants will be contacted the HELP team for arranging their travel and providing the necessary information about the event.

## Further information

For any information, do not hesitate to **contact the Project team**:

Content related issues, speakers, agenda: Oana Gîrlescu – Project Coordinator ([oana.girlescu@coe.int](mailto:oana.girlescu@coe.int))

Organisational and administrative issues: Xavier Ronecker – Project Assistant ([xavier.ronecker@coe.int](mailto:xavier.ronecker@coe.int))

EJTN contact point: Borja Saez Martinez – Innovation Manager ([orja.saez-martinez@ejtn.eu](mailto:orja.saez-martinez@ejtn.eu))

## Thematic Seminar and Course Launch

### Judges Upholding the Rule of Law

### Agenda

<b>Tuesday, 17 December 2024</b>	
09.00 – 09.15	Registration of participants
09.15 – 09.25	<b>Welcome address</b> <i>Ana Maria Telbis, Head of the Justice and Human Rights Training Division, Council of Europe</i>
09.25 – 10.10	<b>Getting to know each other – tour de table and sharing of expectations</b> <b>The HELP Programme -presentation and walk-through</b> <i>Oana Gîrlescu, EU-CoE 'HELP in the EU IV,' Project Coordinator, Council of Europe</i>
10.10 – 11.10	<b>TBC</b> <i>TBC</i>
11.10 – 11.40	<b>Break (Group photo)</b>
11.40 – 12.30	<b>The impact of training on preserving judicial independence - challenges and opportunities</b> <i>Ingrid Derveaux, Secretary General of the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN)</i>
12.30 – 13.45	<b>Lunch break</b>
13.45 – 14.30	<b>TBC</b> <i>TBC</i>
14.30 – 15.15	<b>Presentation of the HELP course on Judges Upholding the Rule of Law</b> <b>The implementation of the online course: presentation of the page, planning, evaluation</b> <i>Gianluca Grasso and Evgenia Papadopoulou, HELP tutors</i>
15.15 – 15.45	<b>Coffee Break</b>
15.45 – 16.30	<b>Key case-law of the ECtHR</b> <i>Raffaele Sabato, Judge at the European Court of Human Rights</i>
16.30 – 17.00	<b>Preparation session for the Grand Chamber Hearing at the ECtHR</b> <b>Q/A session, conclusions and closure of the first day</b> <i>Oana Gîrlescu, EU-CoE 'HELP in the EU IV,' Project Coordinator, Council of Europe</i>
19.30- 21.30	<b>Dinner (TBD)</b>

<b>Wednesday, 18 December 2024</b>	
08.00 – 08.15	Arrival of participants – <b>ECtHR Building</b>
08.15 – 11.45	<b>ECtHR Grand Chamber hearing in <a href="#">Danileț v. Romania</a> (no. 16915/21)</b>
11.45 – 12.15	<b>Return to the seminar room and coffee break</b>
12.15 – 13.00	<b>Q/A session, conclusions and closure of the event</b> <i>TBC, Registry of the European Court of Human Rights</i> <i>Oana Gîrlescu, EU-CoE 'HELP in the EU IV,' Project Coordinator, Council of Europe</i>

*\*Agenda may be subject to change*