



STICHTING
EUROPEAN
LAWYERS
FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT

2020

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LAWYERS FOR JUSTICE

FOREWORD

2020 has been a very disruptive year. The global spread of Covid-19 has had a devastating impact on a globalised world. Along with the terrible loss of life (in millions), the stress on health systems, the destruction of jobs and an economic downturn whose consequences will be felt for at least a decade, came increased barriers to mobility. On the other hand, we witnessed the resilience of human nature and the use of technological advances from the last decade to allow the world to keep running. Adaptation was required from all of us, and we have all proceeded in the hopes of a brighter future.

The European Lawyers Foundation (ELF) has also faced challenges posed by the pandemic and has adapted to new circumstances. The most important challenges arose in our training projects where, after a time needed for adaptation, we managed to move from in-person to online training. We did not simply switch to a particular IT service but analysed, in cooperation with our partners, the best option for each event. This took time and work, but the results (participants' satisfaction) show that the solutions were the correct ones. I would like to thank all the various actors who permitted us to continue to implement our training activities despite the difficulties: from the European Commission (which co-finances most of our projects) to the Bars and Law Societies which partner us, and the speakers and participants in our training events. All of them contributed significantly to help us fulfil our mission which, as our motto reads, is "*lawyers for Justice*".

Last year, we not only carried out training activities and conducted research projects, but also worked to ensure future projects which would be relevant for EU lawyers. We were awarded two new projects on training for lawyers on EU civil law matters (CiviLAW project) and on data protection (TRADATA 2). These projects will be in addition to our current activities on training in various EU competences but also in promoting the rule of law within and beyond the EU.

Last but not least, there were several important developments in the life of ELF in 2020:

First, ELF modified its statutes, with the aim of adapting the Foundation more closely to Bars' and Law Societies' needs. While maintaining our strong cooperation with the CCBE, we took steps to ensure that our governance focuses on Bars and Law Societies as the centre of the Foundation, since we are a network of Bars and Law Societies. Consequently, as from May 2020, ELF has a new structure that better reflects its mission and objectives.

Second, we moved from our premises at the Dutch Bar to new premises in The Hague. I want to express ELF's great gratitude to the Dutch Bar, which has hosted us for more than six year in their own building. Since the Dutch Bar has now moved from that location, ELF had to move as well. We decided to move to The Hague Humanity Hub, where many organisations working in the field of justice have their headquarters. So, ELF continues to share office space within a legal environment, with other organisations promoting justice worldwide.

Finally, the reform of our statutes was accompanied by a modernisation of our organisational image. We adopted a new logo that, while still reflecting our European nature in the field of justice, better reflects what we stand for and what we do.

The past year, with all its difficulties, including lockdown is almost all countries, has not been easy for anyone. But with the strong support of the Bars and Law Societies which are generous donors to ELF, and with the work of our partners, we have adapted to the new circumstances without diminishing our efforts to work as hard as we can for the values that ELF has represented since its establishment. We thank all our donors for their support, and we will always take steps to guarantee our commitment to meet their current and future expectations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Péter S. Szabó', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Péter S. Szabó
Chair of the Board of Directors

STRUCTURE OF THE ORGANISATION

The European Lawyers Foundation is composed of three main bodies: the Board of Directors, the Supervisory Board and the Advisory Board.

President of Honour

Professor Friedrich Graf von Westphalen (Germany), chairman of the Foundation's Board of Directors from October 2014 to January 2017.

The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors, *inter alia*, establishes guiding principles for the day-to-day running of the Foundation, checks on a regular basis all the information related to the Foundation's finances, and approves (within the framework of its competences) the participation of the organisation in projects.

In May 2020, following amendments to the organisation's statutes, a new Board of Directors was elected, composed of the following three members:



Chair of the Board
Hungary



Board Member
Italy



Board Member
France

From January to May 2020, the members of the Board of Directors were the following:

- Evangelos Tsouroulis (Greece, chair)

- Marta Isern i Busquets (Spain)
- Yves Oschinsky (Belgium)

Supervisory Board

The Supervisory Board examines all financial aspects of the Foundation and monitors the financial development of projects and expenditure.

The members of the SB in the period from May 2020 onwards were the following:



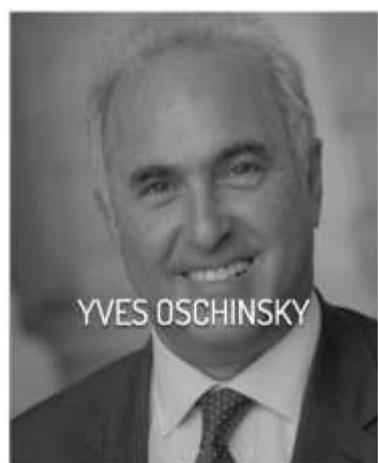
Chair of the Board
Poland



Board Member
Germany



Board Member
Spain



Board Member
Belgium



Board Member
France

From January to May 2020, the members of the Supervisory Board were the following:

- Michel Benichou (France, chair)
- Maria Slazak (Poland)
- Francesca Sorbi (Italy)
- Jacques Tacquet (France)
- José de Freitas (Portugal)

Advisory Board

The Advisory Board delivers opinions on projects and strategic matters and other issues of great importance. It is composed of representatives of Bars and Law Societies which are donors to the ELF.

As at 31 December 2020, the following were members of the Advisory Board:

- Piotr Kardas (Poland, chair)
- Michael Pallauf (Austria)
- Michel Benichou (France)
- Laris Vrahimis (Cyprus)
- Michael Jurgen Werner (Germany)
- Carlo Forte (Italy)
- René Diederich (Luxembourg)
- Laurence Krief (France)
- Piotr Bober (Poland)
- Josep Canicio i Querol (Spain)
- Jarkko Ruohola (Finland)
- Eva Indruchova (Czech Republic)
- Georgios Papadopoulos (Greece)
- Eric Balate (Belgium)

Secretariat

The Foundation's Secretariat is responsible for the Foundation's day-to-day management. It is made up of people with knowledge of both the legal profession and project management.

The Secretariat is headed by the Managing Director, who carries out the day-to-day management of the Foundation under the supervision of the Board of Directors. He can represent the Foundation at European level and internationally within the powers entrusted to him. A Project Manager, an Office Manager and a Senior Project Counsellor complete the Secretariat.



Alonso Hernández-Pinzón García
Managing Director



Vasileios Stathopoulos
Project Manager



Féline van der Heyden
Financial Officer and
Office Manager



Jonathan Goldsmith
Senior Project Counsel

THE EUROPEAN LAWYERS FOUNDATION

The Foundation shall promote access to justice, training of lawyers, activities relating to the exercise of the profession of lawyer, the rule of law and legal services and substantive developments in the law itself, the defence and protection of human rights and human rights defenders, and international justice. The Foundation shall work at both European and international level. The Foundation, which is a network composed of Bars and Law Societies from Europe, will fulfil its objective through the implementation of projects.

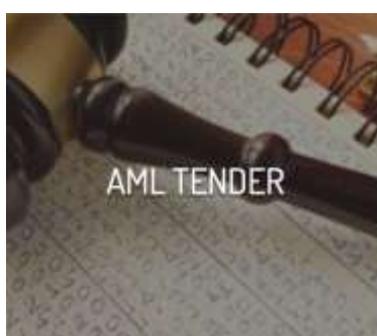


PROJECTS RUN BY THE EUROPEAN LAWYERS FOUNDATION

Number of lawyers trained 1 January 2020 – 31 December 2020: 819

European projects

Anti-money laundering and counter terrorist financing (AML/CTF)



On 18th November 2019, ELF and the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) started a project on the “*Development and organisation of training for lawyers on anti-money laundering and counter terrorist financing rules at EU level*”, which is made up of three main tasks: (1) the development of a strategy to train lawyers on AML/CTF issues; (2) the drafting of an EU-level training programme; and (3) the holding of training activities.

Last year, the ELF-CCBE consortium was able to finalise the first group of activities in relation to Task 1, which involved the drafting of a Training Needs Assessment for lawyers on AML/CTF, following an EU-wide analysis undertaken in the EU Member States. This Training Needs Assessment was also the basis for developing the Strategy to train lawyers on AML/CTF, which is expected to be the guideline for use by EU training providers when training lawyers on AML/CTF matters.

In 2020 we also started work on Task 2, which involved the production of the EU-level training programme and the development of two manuals that complement it: a trainers’ manual (focused on those who will organise training for lawyers on AML/CTF in the future) and a users’ manual (targeting lawyers who will benefit from training on AML/CTF). This activity will be completed in 2021, when the training activities will also take place (a train-the-trainers event and three regional cross-border training activities), before the project ends in the last quarter of 2021.

In the framework of this project, a [specific website](#) has been developed, where information and news about the project can be found, and material can be consulted.

Disclaimer

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Artificial Intelligence for Lawyers (AI4Lawyers)



The AI4Lawyers project, which is run by a consortium composed of the European Lawyers Foundation (ELF) and the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), kicked off on 1st April 2020 with a threefold objective:

1. to produce a detailed overview of “average state of the art” IT capabilities of lawyers and law firms in the European Union and a gap analysis using comparisons with other non-EU countries;
2. to carry out an assessment of the opportunities and barriers in the use of natural language processing tools in small and medium sized law practices;
3. To draft a guide for EU lawyers and law firms on the use of AI in legal practice.

The project is divided into three different phases, each corresponding to one of the above objectives. Despite the restrictions created by the Covid-19 pandemic, the project did not suffer any delay and the various tasks to be implemented under phase 1 could be implemented as scheduled.

The project’s main work is carried out by a project core team, which is composed of ELF and CCBE staff, of lawyers from various EU Member States, by a technical expert and an IT expert.

AI4Lawyers was one of the projects listed in the [2019-2023 Action Plan on European e-Justice](#) (project number 11).

For more information about this project, click [here](#).



The project is co-financed with the support of the European Union's Justice programme

Training of lawyers on EU instruments in criminal proceedings (CrimiLAW)



The CrimiLAW project on training lawyers in EU instruments on procedural rights in criminal proceedings was awarded funding from the EU in 2019, and officially started on 15 January 2020. ELF and the project partners (Athens Bar, Budapest Bar, Spanish Bar, Italian Bar, Cyprus Bar, Paris Bar and the Polish National Bar of Attorneys-at-Law) met in January 2020 in Budapest for the kick-off meeting.

After the kick-off meeting, the project's consortium started to work on the first training event, which was expected to take place in Cyprus in April 2020. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, these events and the subsequent ones (where preparatory work was conducted) were cancelled. Taking into account the evolution of the pandemic, the consortium decided to analyse various options for carrying out the training activities online. Due to the special nature of this project (events with participants from all the partners' home states with networking opportunities), it was decided to hold the training as a two-week online course where, beyond the live sessions with top experts on instruments in procedural rights in criminal proceedings, participants will be able to e-network with other colleagues and will have access to relevant material on the topics addressed by the project.

For more information about this project, click [here](#).



The project is co-financed with the support of the European Union's Justice programme

Multilateral Exchange of Lawyers 2 (LAWYEREX)



The LAWYEREX project was launched in the summer of 2019 with the objective of offering the opportunity for 107 lawyers to be trained in host institutions of the legal sector (law firms or bars) in 9 different EU Member States (Italy, Spain, France, Poland, Greece, Czechia, Cyprus, Romania and Slovakia), so that participating lawyers will be able to: learn about other Member States' legal systems; create or consolidate networking capacities; and improve their legal language skills.

24 lawyers participated in the exchanges carried out during the months of January and February 2020. Another 32 lawyers were selected, and their exchanges settled so they could start their exchanges as from March 2020. However, due to the Covid-19 outbreak in the EU in the spring of 2020, the subsequent health crisis and the restrictions and limitations on mobility, none of these exchanges (and the others expected to follow until the completion of 107 exchanges) could take place.

In order to gain some time to allow all the exchanges to be completed, the project consortium asked the European Commission for an extension of the project for the maximum time possible (30 months).

For more information about this project, click [here](#).



The project is co-financed with the support of the European Union's Justice programme

Recognition of foreign training activities for lawyers (REFOTRA)



Continuing professional training of lawyers in the EU is not standardised, as it depends on each Member State's own rules. This means that cross-border continuing training (training undertaken by a lawyer in a Member State different to the one where he/she has legal training obligations) is not always easily recognised as Continuing Legal Education (CLE) under national schemes. In order to assist possible future moves to the next stage of recognition of cross-border training for lawyers, the European Lawyers Foundation (ELF) and the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) worked from 2018 to 2020 on the REFOTRA project with the objective of facilitating the recognition process in a cross-border context, so as to be of benefit to Bars and Law Societies and lawyers in the future.

The REFOTRA project, which officially ended on 30th June 2020, was very successfully implemented from all perspectives. All the project's objectives were fully achieved, as follows:

1. An "Assessment report on the situation in EU and EEA Member States regarding recognition of foreign training" was produced as part of the project's phase 1. This document was the result of analysis of the responses to a questionnaire completed by Bars and Law Societies of EU and EEA Member States, which provided very useful data for phase 2 of the project.
2. Based on the results of the assessment undertaken in phase 1, the project team worked on possible solutions to facilitate the recognition of cross-border training. All the work in this second phase was contained in a document submitted to the EC on "Recommendations for solutions to facilitate the recognition of cross-border training".
3. During the project's phase 3, the only solution considered as possible for the test of cross-border recognition of training was piloted by various Bars and Law Societies with compulsory CLE schemes. The results were very positive and led to the identification of challenges and how to address them.

The very successful results of this project were possible due to the engagement of the participants. The main work was undertaken by the project core team, composed of representatives of ELF, CCBE, the Italian Bar Association, the Law Society of Ireland and the National Polish Council of Attorneys-At-Law. Further to this group, Bars and Law Societies of the EU and the EEA provided very positive insights under phase 1.

In phase 3, various Bars participated in the testing of the solution identified under phase 2 (the REFOTRA certificate template), which ensured that the proposed solution is a valid method for easier recognition of cross-border training for lawyers in the EU. Likewise, the Training Committee of the CCBE, composed of experts on training of lawyers from various EU jurisdictions, also provided help in making the project a success.

For more information about this project, click [here](#).



The project is co-financed with the support of the European Union's Justice programme

Training of Lawyers on EU Immigration and Asylum Law (TRALIM 2)



TRALIM 2, which was built on the success of its predecessor TRALIM project (where 150 lawyers were trained on the EU law relating to asylum and immigration) has continued and scaled up the previous effort by expanding the number of participating countries (adding France), the scope of activities (adding visits to reception centres in conjunction with the seminars), the training content (with the addition of seminars on unaccompanied migrant minors) and the number of lawyers to be trained (600 lawyers, 4 times more than in the previous project). The project is run by ELF in cooperation with the Athens Bar, the Italian Bar, the Law Society of Ireland, the Paris Bar, the Polish National Bar of Attorneys-at-Law and the Spanish Bar.

The TRALIM 2 project is divided into three main pillars:

1st pillar – EU immigration and asylum law (TRALIM seminars): Training takes place through the organisation of 13 seminars addressed to 390 lawyers from all partner countries.

2nd pillar – Rights of unaccompanied migrant minors (TRAUMA seminars): Training takes place through the organisation of 6 seminars addressed to 180 lawyers from all partner countries.

3rd pillar – Field experience (Short visits to reception centres): 30 lawyers (5 per partner) will have the chance to participate in short visits (3 days) to reception centres in Greece, Italy and Spain.

The Covid-19 outbreak in the European Union in the spring of 2020 and the subsequent pandemic obliged the project consortium to extend the project from its initial 24 months to 30 months, in order to adapt the training events to the new situation created by the health crisis (with lockdowns and restrictions to mobility).

ELF and its partners in this project worked in close cooperation to ensure that, despite the exceptional circumstances, the training could be carried out satisfactorily. Indeed, the online format of the training was a big success which allowed the consortium to train many more lawyers than originally planned (1.729 lawyers trained vs 600 lawyers committed in the Grant agreement).

For more information about this project, click [here](#)



The project is co-financed with the support of the European Union's Justice programme

Me-CODEX 2



The objective of this project is to maintain the IT infrastructure created under the [e-CODEX project](#). The project started in July 2019 and was supposed to end in June 2021. However, its implementation period has been extended until September 2021.

During 2020, and despite the Covid-19 pandemic, partners continued to implement the various activities scheduled. Physical meetings were replaced by regular videocalls to avoid delays.

2020 was a key year for the e-CODEX family of projects and, especially for Me-CODEX 2. This importance was mainly due to the fact that the European Commission published its proposal for a Regulation on a computerised system for communication in cross-border civil and criminal proceedings (e-codex system) and amending regulation (EU) 2018/1726. Among other things, this proposal ends the uncertainty of who would be in charge of e-CODEX in the future. According to the proposal, the best solution to ensure a stable future for e-CODEX is to transfer it to the European Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (eu-LISA), and mandating the Agency to provide the system's operational management.

ELF, which collaborates in this project with the CCBE, will be monitoring the future negotiations on the proposal for a Regulation on e-CODEX to ensure lawyers' needs are taken into account.

This project is financed with the support of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) of the European Union



EU Litigation for lawyers 2



This project, coordinated by the Academy of European Law (ERA) in collaboration with ELF and seven Bars and training schools of lawyers (Spanish National Bar, Athens Bar Association, Polish National Bar of Attorneys at Law, Bar Council of Ireland, Finnish Bar Association, Haute Ecole des Avocats Conseil, Ecole Régionale des Avocats du Grand Est), ended on 30 November 2020 after the last two training events took place.

The objective of the project, co-funded by the Justice Programme of the EU, was to raise awareness among lawyers in private practice about litigation before the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), to make them more effective in their submissions to the Court and to guarantee real access to justice and proper application of EU law.

For more information about this project, click [here](#)



The project is co-financed with the support of the European Union's Justice programme

Evidence 2 e-CODEX



This project, which came to an end in February 2020, aimed at cross-fertilisation between stakeholders and infrastructure, so as to be ready to implement changes in handling and exchanging electronic evidence. The project facilitated and encouraged international cooperation in the criminal sector between the Member State authorities involved by improving the conditions for a secure and fast exchange of electronic evidence in the EU in the context of the European Investigation Order in criminal matters (EIO) and Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) Procedures. ELF, which collaborated with the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe, was one of the partners in the project, which included 17 partners from 10 different countries, including INTERPOL and six Member States' Ministries of Justice.

For more information about this project, click [here](#)



The project is co-financed with the support of the European Union's Justice programme

External projects

Venezuela



ELF has been actively involved in Venezuela since 2015 when we started our work on rule of law issues there. Although the pandemic made it difficult to work on projects in which regular contact with non-EU partners is necessary, we managed to conduct various activities in the context of the project. For instance, we participated in an online event organised by the Venezuelan NGO Foro Penal Venezolano on 3rd December 2020 in which we addressed the challenges Venezuela faces in restoring the rule of law and dealing with the violations to human rights committed daily by regime officials.

ELF has also been supporting Venezuelan lawyers who are harassed by the regime of Nicolás Maduro and has closely followed the preliminary examination on Venezuela in the International Criminal Court.

PREMIERE ON LINE - THE NETHERLANDS

A documentary film **Rescheduled**

STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE

(Que se Haga Justicia)

The history of Foro Penal in Venezuela

An NGO composed of more than 6,000 activists worldwide that has assisted legally more than 12,000 political detainees.

Documentary and Conversatory
Celebrating 1 year of Foro Penal the Netherlands

With the participation of
Alfredo Romero
Director President of Foro Penal
Alonso Hernández-Pinzón
Managing Director of European Lawyers Foundation

Documentary
Available Dec 2 till Dec 3

Conversatory
Thursday Dec 3
20h CET
3pm CCS

Register to obtain access at: foropenal.com

Foro Penal

Fiji



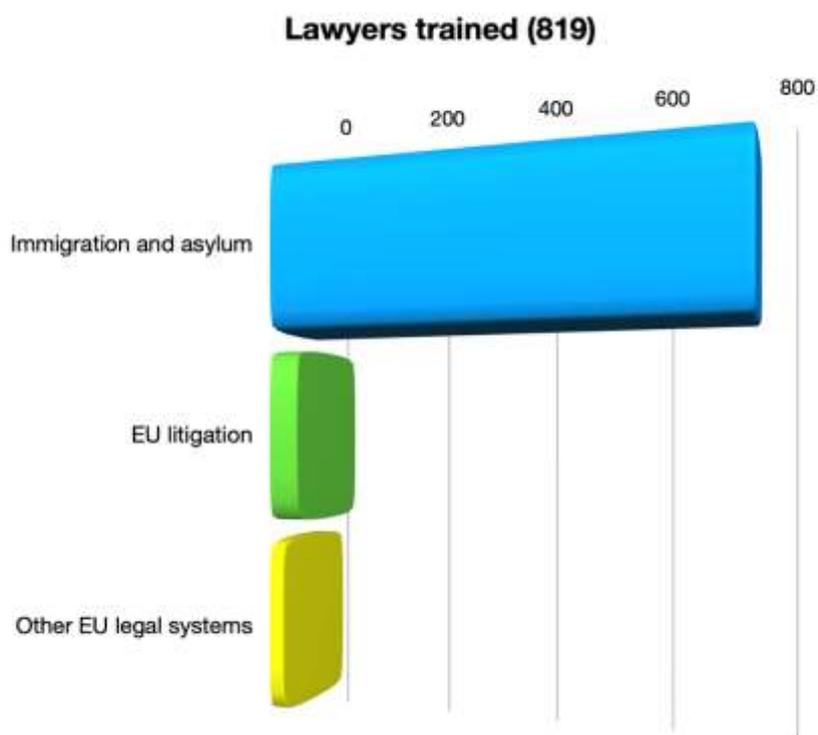
In the last semester of 2020, ELF started to work on a second project in Fiji (a continuation of a successful project for the Pacific area implemented by ELF in 2019) in collaboration with the Fiji Law Society and on behalf of the International Bar Association's Committee on International Trade in Legal Services.

During 2020, our work focused on preparing the international aspects of the conference that would take place in Denaru, Fiji, on 8 and 9 January 2021 as both an in-person and online event. The conference, *Law and Practice beyond the pandemic*, dealt (among other things) with issues such as the legal problems arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, new areas of practice, lawyers' wellbeing, law firm management post-pandemic and lawyers and social media.

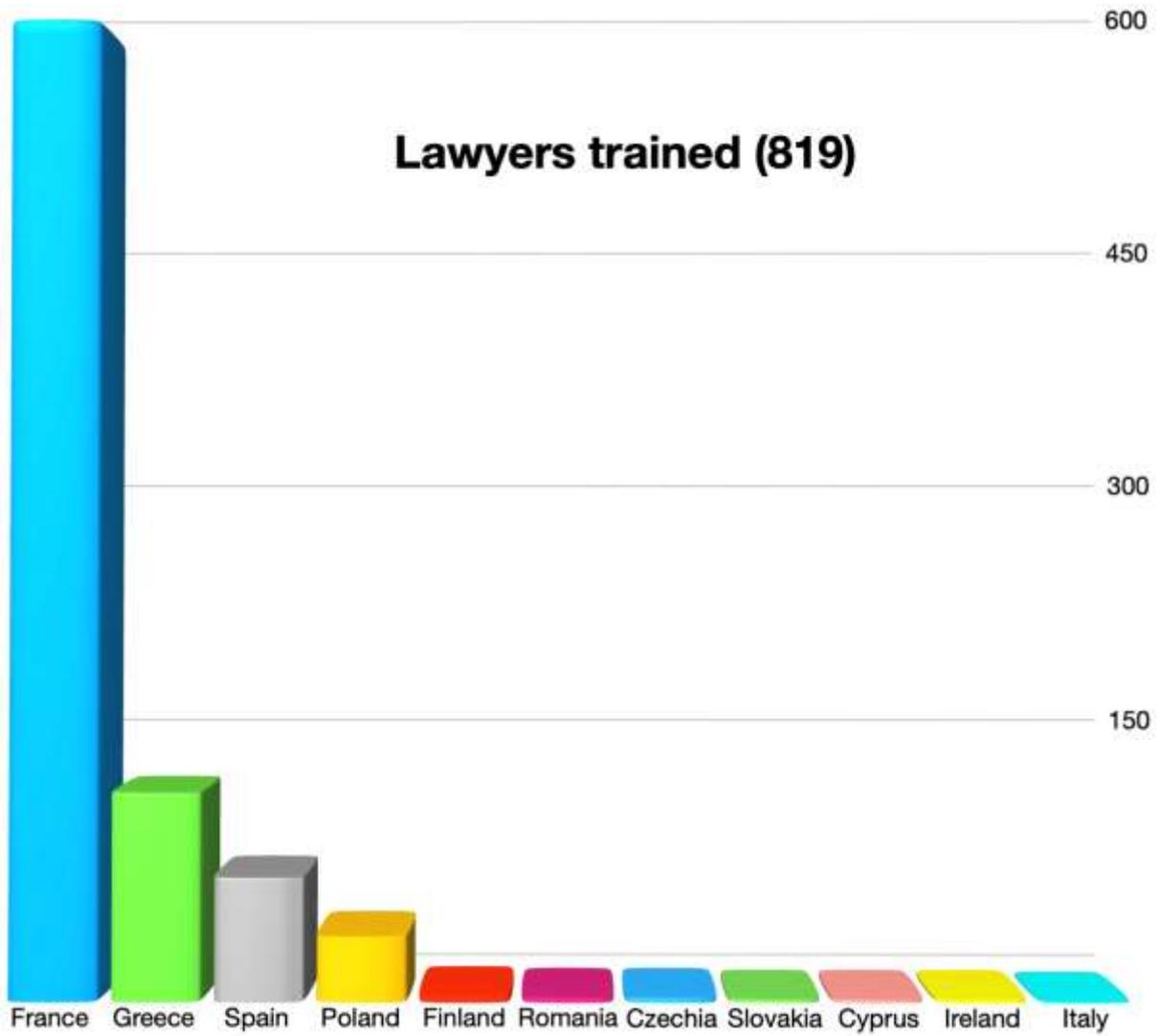
ELF prepared a report about the various topics addressed during the two-day conference, which can be downloaded [here](#).

STATISTICS ON ELF'S TRAINING ACTIVITIES

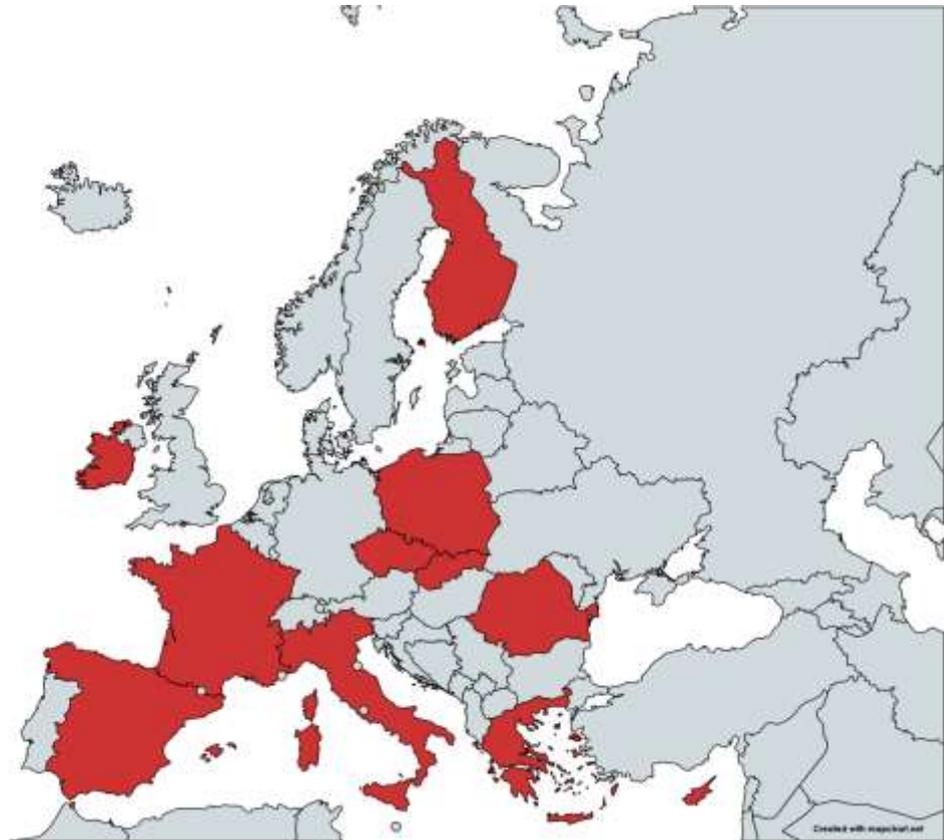
Number of lawyers trained in 2020 per subject area



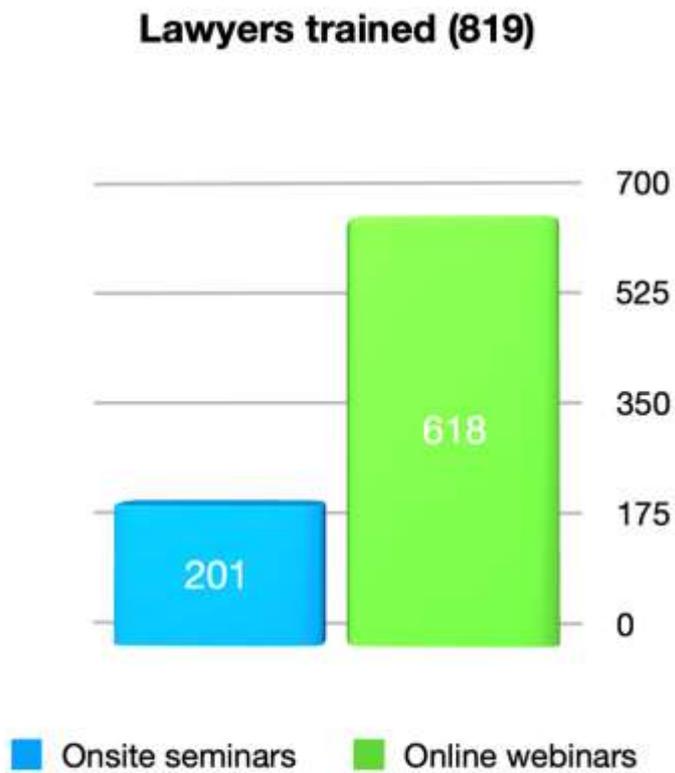
Lawyers trained in 2020 per EU Member State



Map of EU Member states reached by ELF activities in 2020



Lawyers trained in 2020 per training format



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