



Best Practices in training of judges and prosecutors

Category of practice: **Innovative Training Methodology**

Type of practice: **Promising Practice**

Country: **Bulgaria**

April, 2014

Title of practice	Comprehensive, Multi-Faceted Approach for Training in EU Law
<i>Key features:</i>	<p>In Bulgaria, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) has implemented a variety of tools that contribute to the proper application of EU law by the Bulgarian magistrates. One of the tools is the use of the Extranet and Discussion Forum in a Distance Learning Portal.</p> <p>Since 2009, the NIJ has been using an Extranet in addition to its Distance Learning Portal and Discussion Forum. It plays a supporting role in the training process, as it meets the need to provide a reliable source of information that is regularly updated, and can be easily accessed and consulted.</p> <p>This professional virtual space was created in 2007-2009, under EU-funded projects. Initially it was designed as a communication tool to serve the judiciary in matters relating to European law. It has been further upgraded to serve as a platform for the exchange of information in the network of EU law co-ordinators in the courts. Currently, the NIJ is uploading a great variety of training and information materials for professional use by judges and prosecutors who are registered as users.</p> <p>Since 2012 this professional virtual space has also been opened to trainee judges and prosecutors. All practical training materials (court decisions, assignments and exercises used during their 9-month initial training at the NIJ) are uploaded onto the Extranet and participants can consult them from any location. Additionally, in 2013 under an EU-funded project the NIJ has purchased e-books for trainee judges in order to assist them in the learning process during their initial training.</p>

	<p>In addition, the NIJ provides updated information in the form of various electronic resources via its web page. The same line of activities includes e-publications on EU law addressed to all magistrates. A specific sub-page within the NIJ website dedicated to the European Arrest Warrant was developed to cover a variety of practical issues pertaining to its proper application. The information is updated on an ongoing basis with current cases studies and other examples from the European Court of Justice.</p>
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<p><i>Other comments</i></p>	<p>This practice is a PROMISING PRACTICE as it has potential but requires a significant investment to make available and maintain the necessary information.</p> <p>The tools mentioned form part of the Best Practice 'A comprehensive, multi-faceted approach for training in EU law and international judicial co-operation' described under the field 'implementation of training tools to favour the correct application of EU law and international judicial co-operation'.</p> <p>The other tools that are in place at the NIJ are: 1) EU Law as an integral part of national law training programmes at the NIJ; 2); and 3) a national network of EU law coordinators.</p> <p>Since 2011, EU law is not distinguished as a separate discipline, but is permanently integrated as a module within national law training at the NIJ, e.g., 'Application of the Family Code in tune with the acting EU legislation', 'Order for payment proceeding – legal framework according to the Civil Procedure Code and the EU Law', etc.</p> <p>Moreover, the NIJ has established an EU law co-ordinators network. This includes civil, commercial, administrative and criminal law judges who act as key reference points in the main Bulgarian courts. They have access to additional information resources and can be consulted by their colleagues for specific information or advice on the application of EU law. The judge co-ordinators also maintain professional contact with the National Institute.</p>

The application of this practice contributes to maintaining the general awareness of Bulgarian magistrates on the application of the various legal instruments of EU law.

Source: Pilot Project - European Judicial Training: "*Lot 1 – Study on best practices in training judges and prosecutors*", carried out by the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN)