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FBE BULLETIN

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Dear Members of the Federation of European Bar Associations,



It is a great honour and responsibility to address you as President of the Federation of European Bar Associations (FBE).

At the heart of our mission lies a fundamental principle: the independence of the legal profession and of Bar Associations is essential to the rule of law, the protection of human rights and the proper functioning of justice.

Across Europe and beyond, lawyers and Bar Associations are increasingly confronted with challenges that directly affect their independence, professional integrity and ability to protect the rights of their clients. The FBE must therefore remain a strong and united voice for the legal profession. Our principal objective must be to protect and strengthen the independence of lawyers and Bar Associations, their right to self-regulation, and their essential role as guardians of the rule of law and human rights.

At the same time, I believe that the strength of the FBE lies in its members. We will work to strengthen the connections between our Bar Associations, encourage the exchange of experience and create more opportunities for direct cooperation among our members.

We will encourage and support the active participation of smaller Bar Associations and those from less represented regions of Europe, ensuring that their voices, experiences and perspectives are fully reflected within our Federation. Every member should have the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from the work of the FBE. A stronger and more inclusive network means a stronger European legal profession.

We will also strive to participate in and develop different projects and initiatives across Europe, bringing our members together around practical areas of common interest. Through cooperation with lawyers, Bar Associations and other professional partners, we can transform the FBE from a platform for exchange into an increasingly active network for cooperation and concrete action.

At the same time, we will open the FBE further to the world. We will seek closer cooperation with international legal organisations, institutions and professional communities, while developing practical projects and initiatives together with lawyers and Bar Associations. Through concrete cooperation and joint projects, we can increase the visibility, relevance and influence of the FBE and ensure that the voice of the European legal profession is heard where decisions affecting our profession and the rule of law are being made.

Our commitment also includes building a more inclusive and connected professional community. We will continue to support equal opportunities, the advancement of women in the legal profession and gender equality and inclusion, while promoting an environment in which every member can contribute fully to the work of our Federation.

The challenges before us are significant, including technological transformation, artificial intelligence, changing regulatory frameworks and new pressures on the legal profession. We must approach these challenges with openness and innovation, but without losing sight of what must never be compromised: the independence, dignity and freedom of the legal profession.

The FBE was created to bring European Bars together. Today, we have the opportunity to make that connection stronger, more visible and more meaningful than ever.

I invite each of you to contribute to this common effort. Let us strengthen our cooperation, encourage greater participation from every part of Europe, stand together in defence of the independence of the legal profession, and ensure that Bar Associations remain strong pillars of democracy, the rule of law and human rights.

Together, as European Bars, we can protect our profession, strengthen our institutions and build a stronger voice for justice and the rule of law.

With my sincere regards,

*Rajko Marić, President
Federation of European Bar Associations (FBE)*



Interview with Rajko Marić, President of the FBE

conducted by FBE



Let us start at the beginning. What first inspired you to become a lawyer, and what attracted you to the legal profession?

I was attracted to law because it brings together several things that have always interested me: people, institutions, society and the search for solutions. Even as a young person, I was fascinated by the fact that legal rules are not simply abstract provisions; they have a very real impact on people's lives, businesses and relationships.

What particularly attracted me to the legal profession was the responsibility that comes with it. A lawyer is often called upon at moments when something important is at stake. You have to understand not only the law, but also the circumstances, the interests and sometimes the concerns of the person or company you represent. That combination of intellectual challenge and human responsibility is what made me choose this profession.

Over the years, I have come to appreciate another aspect of being a lawyer: our profession can contribute to building trust. Whether between individuals, companies or institutions, lawyers often have a role in making complex situations understandable and finding a way forward.

My professional life has allowed me to experience that responsibility from many different perspectives. I have worked on complex and high-value business matters, **but also on human rights and rule-of-law cases in very difficult geopolitical circumstances.** Those experiences have reinforced

my belief that, at its best, the legal profession is ultimately about people, responsibility and the search for justice.



What did your path from law student to practising lawyer look like, and were there any people or experiences that particularly shaped you as a lawyer?

The transition from being a law student to becoming a practising lawyer was, for me, a gradual process of learning how different the law can look when you move from books and lectures into real life.

University gave me the foundations, but practice taught me how to apply them. I learned that there is rarely a single textbook answer to a real legal problem. You have to listen carefully, ask the right questions, understand the broader context and accept that sometimes the best solution is not the most obvious one.

My career has also given me the opportunity to experience virtually every important dimension of the legal profession. I spent almost ten years examining candidates for the bar and judicial examination – an examination that is a fundamental professional requirement for those who wish to become lawyers, judges or prosecutors. That experience gave me a particularly deep appreciation of professional standards and of the responsibility involved in entering the legal profession.

I have also had the privilege of serving in leadership positions within the legal profession. I was President of the Bar Association of Vojvodina, Novi Sad Branch, for seven years from the beginning of my professional career, subsequently served for eight years on the governing board of the national Bar, and I am currently a member of the governing body of the Bar Association of Vojvodina

I have also experienced difficult moments when lawyers themselves had to defend the independence and interests of the profession, including the lawyers' strike. These experiences taught me that professional leadership is not simply about holding a position. It is about accepting responsibility, **particularly when circumstances become difficult.**

I have been fortunate to meet colleagues, mentors and clients who influenced the way I approach the profession. Each experience, whether successful or difficult, has taught me something. Perhaps the most important lesson has been that reputation is built over time – through consistency, reliability and the way you behave when circumstances become difficult.



You have built a practice with a strong international and business dimension. What drew you towards cross-border legal work and international cooperation?

I have always found the international dimension of legal practice particularly stimulating. Cross-border work requires you to look beyond one legal system and understand how different legal, economic and institutional environments interact.

My international practice has included some of the most demanding and high-value business matters, where the legal issues are often inseparable from commercial, financial and geopolitical considerations. At the same time, I have worked on human rights and rule-of-law matters in particularly challenging international environments.

That combination has taught me that international legal practice requires much more than technical knowledge. **It requires judgement, discretion, an understanding of different cultures and institutions, and the ability to build trust between people who may approach the same problem from very different perspectives.**

It also requires a certain openness. You have to be prepared to work with **different professional cultures, approaches and expectations**. What may be completely natural in one jurisdiction may be unusual in another.

For me, international practice has therefore never been only about transactions or legal technicalities. It is also about relationships. In many cases, successful international cooperation begins with lawyers knowing and trusting one another. This is one of the reasons I have always believed that professional networks such as the FBE are so important.



You are also the Honorary Consul of Slovenia in Serbia and a board member of the World Federation of Consuls. Has your consular experience influenced the way you understand the role of lawyers in building bridges between countries, institutions and people?

Very much so. My experience as Honorary Consul has reinforced something I already understood from international legal practice: relations between countries are ultimately built by people.

But my involvement in diplomacy has developed beyond my role as Honorary Consul of Slovenia in Serbia. I brought together the Honorary

Consuls representing different countries in Serbia and was elected President of their association. At the international level, I also serve on the governing board of the worldwide federation representing consuls.

Diplomacy is a very specific and demanding discipline. It requires patience, discretion, precision and an ability to understand different perspectives, often in circumstances where political, economic and human considerations are closely intertwined. You have to know when to speak, when to listen and, perhaps most importantly, how to maintain dialogue when circumstances are difficult.

A consular role gives you a different perspective. You encounter businesses, institutions and individuals who may need assistance in understanding another country, its institutions or its way of doing things. You become, in a sense, a point of connection.

This experience has strengthened my belief that lawyers can play an important role in building bridges. We work at the intersection of individuals, businesses and institutions, and we are often among the first people called upon when different legal systems or professional cultures meet.

I see this as a responsibility as well as a privilege. Whether acting as a lawyer or in my consular capacity, I believe that creating understanding is often just as important as finding the correct legal answer.

 **You are a laureate of the Gusi Peace Prize, often described as the “Asian Nobel Prize” and regarded as one of the world’s most prestigious international awards. You received it as a lawyer and diplomat for your many years of work in the field of human rights, for protecting the role of consuls under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, and for promoting peace while serving as Honorary Consul of Slovenia in Serbia. What does this recognition mean to you?**

It is an exceptional honour to find myself among people from around the world who have been recognised for their contribution to humanity. Although the Gusi Peace Prize is not as widely known as the Nobel Prize, it is considered one of the five most important peace prizes in the world.

I am particularly glad that the award recognised both sides of my work – as a lawyer and as a diplomat. For me, they have never been separate. Defending human rights, protecting the role of consuls under the Vienna

Convention and promoting peace all rest on the same foundation: respect for the law and the willingness to build trust between people and nations.

In my acceptance speech, I dedicated the award to all those who need peace today, and to all those who are fighting for it. For many people around the world, peace is not something that can be taken for granted. It is a daily need and, for some, a daily struggle.

I also see this recognition as closely connected with the United Nations principles of sustainability. The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development makes clear that there can be no sustainable development without peace, and no peace without sustainable development. Goal 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions – reflects something that lawyers understand very well: lasting peace depends on access to justice, the rule of law and accountable institutions. In that sense, the work of lawyers, bar associations and diplomats alike is part of building a more peaceful and sustainable world.



How did you first become involved with the FBE? What made you decide to become actively engaged in the Federation rather than simply participate in its events?

My involvement with the FBE developed naturally from my interest in international professional cooperation. I quickly realised that the Federation offered something more meaningful than simply another professional forum.

My experience in the leadership of the Bar, as well as my work in international legal practice and diplomacy, has shown me the value of professional organisations that bring people together across institutional and national boundaries.

What attracted me was the opportunity to meet colleagues from different jurisdictions and legal traditions and to exchange ideas on issues that affect the profession as a whole. I also appreciated the fact that the FBE brings together lawyers and bar organisations from across Europe in a spirit of dialogue.

I decided to become more actively involved because I believe that **professional organisations are strongest when their members are willing to contribute, rather than simply attend**. If we want the legal profession to have a voice and a sense of community at European level, we all have a role to play.



Your election also underlines something important about the identity of the FBE: its European character extends beyond the borders of the European Union. What does your presidency, as a Serbian lawyer, say about the kind of European legal community the FBE seeks to build?

I believe it demonstrates that Europe, as a legal and professional community, is broader than any single institutional framework.

The European Union is an important political and legal project, but the European legal profession has always had a wider geographical and professional dimension. Lawyers work across borders, legal traditions interact, and professional relationships do not stop at political frontiers.

Coming from Serbia, I see my presidency as an opportunity to underline the inclusive character of the FBE. The Federation can provide a space where lawyers from EU Member States and non-EU European countries meet as professionals, exchange experiences and work together on common challenges.

My own professional experience has reinforced this understanding. Throughout my career, whether in legal practice, Bar leadership, international business or diplomacy, I have worked with people and institutions operating in very different legal and political environments. Those experiences have shown me that cooperation is often most valuable precisely when there are differences to be understood.

For me, **European legal cooperation should be based on dialogue, mutual respect and professional solidarity. Those principles are not limited by borders.**



What do you see as the most important challenges facing the European legal profession today, and where can an organisation such as the FBE make a real difference?

The legal profession is facing several transformations at the same time. **Digitalisation and artificial intelligence are changing the way legal services are delivered and raising new questions about professional responsibility, confidentiality and the role of human judgement.**

At the same time, lawyers continue to face the more fundamental challenge of protecting the rule of law, access to justice and the independence of the legal profession.

My own experience has made me particularly conscious of these issues. I have dealt not only with complex commercial and high-value business disputes, but also with human rights and rule-of-law cases in difficult geopolitical environments. I have also experienced, through my involvement in the Bar, situations in which the profession itself had to defend its independence and professional principles.

These experiences have convinced me that the legal profession must be prepared to protect its fundamental values while also adapting to a rapidly changing world. Technology will change many aspects of legal practice, but it cannot replace professional responsibility, independence, ethics and human judgement.

There is also a generational dimension. **Younger lawyers** are entering a profession that looks very different from the one many of us entered. We need to create opportunities for them to develop professionally, participate in international networks and have their perspectives heard.

I believe the FBE can make a difference precisely by bringing people together. It can facilitate dialogue, exchange practical experience and create opportunities for cooperation between bars and lawyers. The Federation does not need to have all the answers. Its strength can be in creating the environment in which lawyers can find those answers together.



What are your main priorities for your year as President?

My first priority is to **strengthen the sense of community within the Federation**. The FBE is a network of people and institutions, and I would like to see even more interaction between its members.

A second priority is to continue **strengthening international cooperation**, particularly between European bars and lawyers from different legal traditions. My own experience in both Bar leadership and international diplomacy has shown me that relationships built over time are one of the strongest foundations for meaningful cooperation.

I would also like to **encourage greater participation by younger lawyers**, because the future of the profession depends on giving the next generation a meaningful place within our professional organisations.

I would also like the FBE to remain attentive to the major changes affecting the profession – including digitalisation, artificial intelligence, professional ethics, access to justice and the independence of lawyers.

My aim is not to define the presidency by one single initiative. I would rather use the year to strengthen existing relationships, encourage new cooperation and leave the Federation with an even stronger sense of shared purpose.

Finally, I would like to open the FBE to the world of diplomacy, because diplomacy is closely connected with advocacy. As a federation of bar associations, we will keep our bars strong for the future, because I believe our bars will play an important role in defending civil society, human rights and the rule of law.

 When your presidency comes to an end, what would you like people to identify as its particular contribution to the FBE?

I would like people to say that it was a presidency that brought people closer together.

If, at the end of my mandate, colleagues from different countries know one another better, communicate more frequently and have developed new professional relationships or projects together, I would consider that a meaningful contribution.

I would also like to have contributed to making the FBE particularly open to the next generation of lawyers. We have a responsibility to pass on not only legal knowledge, but also the values and traditions of our profession.

My own career has taught me that institutions are ultimately strengthened by the people who participate in them. Whether in a Bar association, an international professional organisation or a diplomatic network, leadership should create connections that remain valuable after an individual mandate has ended.

Ultimately, I would like my presidency to be remembered less for individual events and more for the relationships and cooperation that continued after those events had taken place.

 International cooperation between lawyers has always been at the heart of the FBE. What does professional solidarity across borders mean to you personally?

For me, professional solidarity means recognising that although we practise in different jurisdictions, we share many of the same fundamental responsibilities.

A lawyer in Belgrade, Paris, Madrid, Ljubljana or any other European city may work within a different legal system, but we all understand the importance of professional independence, confidentiality, ethics and respect for the rule of law.

My experience in both the legal profession and diplomacy has shown me that solidarity is not an abstract concept. It is expressed through relationships, through the willingness to listen, and through the ability to support professional colleagues when circumstances become difficult.

Solidarity also means recognising that the challenges facing lawyers increasingly transcend national borders. Whether we are discussing artificial intelligence, professional ethics, access to justice, the independence of lawyers or the protection of fundamental rights, cooperation between professional organisations becomes increasingly important.

The FBE gives this idea a practical dimension. It turns the concept of a European legal community into real professional relationships between people.

 **And finally, if you had to describe the FBE in just three words, what would they be?**

Bars. Cooperation. Solidarity.

These three words, for me, capture both the spirit of the FBE and what I hope to contribute during my presidency.

Bars, because we are the last pillar of defense of civil society. **Cooperation**, because the challenges facing the legal profession increasingly cross borders. And **solidarity**, because ultimately a profession is stronger when its members understand that they are part of something larger than their individual practices and jurisdictions. ◀



BARS



COOPERATION



SOLIDARITY



FBE Amici:

Q&A with Patrick A. Dillen, 2nd Vice President of the FBE



Patrick, as Vice President of the FBE and one of the driving forces behind the FBE Amici initiative, could you tell us where the idea came from and why you felt that the FBE needed such a programme?

First of all, I think the FBE would benefit from opening more to the Younger Generation of lawyers. This is difficult when you are only a Federation of Bars and Law Societies, since their Presidents and representatives have the necessary experience, but unfortunately also the years that comes with this experience.

Secondly, the FBE has so many great initiatives for which more funding would be more than welcome, left aside the fact the cost for running the FBE is becoming higher (all structures are struggling with the balance sheet) so more income seems to be the only way forward.

Over the years (more than 30 in its actual form) the FBE has created an environment described as a big family, where people are happy to meet and exchange ideas at congresses or within the commissions, but also do networking. Until now this was only reserved to Presidents and/or Bar representatives. I think there is a huge potential for members of our member Bars, to benefit from this environment. The spirit of the FBE, however, must be preserved. Therefor The Amici of the FBE will be(come) a separate entity. Amici can participate in part of the activities of the FBE (participate and possibly become a member of (sub)commissions, contests, programmes and congresses, with the exception of the Presidents' reception and the General Assembly)



Until now, the FBE has essentially been a federation of Bars. What changes with the introduction of FBE Amici?

For the member Bars, not that much. Of course, the topics of congresses will be mixed between reflective and practical. The commissions will now have members and participants (the latter from the Amici, who can become members if the President of the commission and Presidency agrees).

The tendency for having more material law commissions we saw over the last few years (Family Law, Administrative Law, etc.) will be stimulated as well as the organisation by the commissions of Webinars.

There will be a WhatsApp group of all the Amici who want, where networking and informal contacts can be made.

And as I told you earlier, I hope the people you meet will also be younger.

It is our intention to organise some new activities where leisure and networking has a bigger place focusing on the Amici.



Who will be eligible to become an FBE Amicus? Will the programme be open to any individual lawyer, or will specific eligibility criteria apply?

We distinguish the general Amicus from a Fellow Amicus.

I will come back to the difference later.

Any individual lawyer or Law Firm can become (Fellow) Amicus. (S)He should support the values of the FBE and have an irreproachable disciplinary past. The application should be accepted by the Presidency.

It is not necessary to be a member of a member Bar but this would get you some benefits (lower membership fee and easier admission).

When will lawyers be able to join and what will the application process look like?

The Amici website will be online in the very near future, so inscriptions will be possible very soon. We will make publicity through Social Media, the EYBA (we have an agreement with the EYBA). We also hope that you, our Member Bars, will make publicity through your channels. Furthermore, the Young Bars will be involved in making the Amici Project known to its members.

Finally, we are counting on word-of-mouth publicity.

You apply through a form on the Website, you pay the yearly admission fee and, if you are not a member of a member bar, you should send a statement of good conduct from your bar. You will get the answer when your admission is accepted. Would you not be accepted, you will be refunded.

If you would want to apply for the special status of Fellow Amicus, you should also send a motivation letter, stating why your recognition as Fellow Amici would be an added value for the FBE.

For individual lawyers the fee is 150 or 200 €/year (depending on whether or not you are of a Member Bar); 50% reduction applies for Amici younger than 35 years. Corporate Amici pay 5 times the individual rate. Fellow Amici pay 3 times the general Amici rate.

What will being an FBE Amicus mean in practice? What concrete benefits will individual lawyers receive?

As Amicus, you will not only, through your membership, defend the values defended by the FBE (multiple initiatives on Human Rights), but can, as mentioned before, participate in (max 2 for individual members and 5 for Corporate) Commissions. You will have a reduction on several Conferences, Congresses and Webinars.

Most of all, you will have a possibility to connect, through the Commissions, at the Congresses and/or activities organised by the FBE (Amici), with lawyers from other countries for referrals, joint work or just to meet up when abroad; you can be part of a big network of lawyers (WhatsApp group).

A last asset is, let us not forget, the friendly family spirit of the FBE in which all this will happen.

As a Fellow Amicus, you will, in addition to all this, have your name or the name of your Firm (for Corporate Fellow Amici) mentioned on every publication and activity of the Federation. You will also enjoy a preferential rate if you wish to sponsor and have your publicity on certain events.



How do you see the Amici initiative changing the relationship between the FBE, the Member Bars and individual lawyers across Europe?

The FBE has already a more direct link to the lawyers than certain other institutions. This will strengthen this relationship. Furthermore, the membership of the FBE of Member Bars will be even more legitimate, since their members, lawyers, will also be Amici. (and benefit from a preferential yearly fee).

Finally, what would you say to a lawyer who asks: “Why should I become an FBE Amicus?”

Is there a nicer way to exercise this wonderful profession than with Friends with whom you can not only enjoy a good time, but increase the reach of your firm and its professional income and have your necessary CPD covered?

To our Member Bars, I would say: “We count on you to help us to reach as many lawyers as possible.” ◀



Lucia Fabbri: the first woman Secretary General in the history of the FBE

Introduction

The election of Lucia Fabbri as Secretary-General of the Fédération des Barreaux d'Europe at the General Congress in Bucharest in June 2026 is a historic event for our Federation. For the first time in the almost 35-year history of the FBE, the office of Secretary-General is held by a woman.

In the profile below, you can read more about Lucia's professional path as an Italian advocate, her long-standing commitment to international co-operation between bars and the vision she brings to her new role.

We warmly congratulate Lucia and wish her every success. We are pleased that elections such as this one make the FBE Board more diverse and bring a wider range of experiences and perspectives to its work.

A profile of Lucia Fabbri

Lucia Fabbri was elected Secretary-General of the FBE at the Bucharest Congress last June.

She is a practising Italian advocate.

She is a graduate of the University of Siena (Thesis on "The Power and Function of the European Parliament after the Maastricht Treaty").

She represents clients before the Italian Supreme Court of Cassation (Corte di Cassazione) in Rome.

She is a member of the Siena Bar Council, elected in 2023, where she is responsible for the international law commission and representative of the Siena Bar in international relations and for relations with the FBE and the UIA.

In the previous 8 years she was member of Consiglio Distrettuale di Disciplina – Distretto di Firenze, this is the Council for the Florence District which deals with ethical questions relating to lawyers in the District Court of Appeal in Florence (the entire Tuscan area).



From the left: Lucia Fabbri, Patrick A. Dillen, and Charles Kaufhold

She is responsible for international relations for the Civil Chamber of Florence and a member of the International Law Commission of the National Union of Civil Chambers.

In 2023 she was appointed member of the European and International Law commission of the Consiglio Nazionale Forense

She is President of UniCrint, the Union of Italian International Relations Commissions (Italian CRINT Union), which brings together representatives of the International Relations Commissions of the Italian Bar Associations.

She is appointed by the Consiglio Nazionale Forense as a member of the Tax Committees of the CCBE.

She is a speaker at international conferences and speaks English and French.

In her own words

I am pleased to say that I am fully aware of the delicate and demanding task that lies ahead of me.

I have given a great deal of thought to the commitment it requires, and I believe I am at a stage in my professional career that is the right time to put myself at the service of – and I mean this in the truest sense of the word – the Federation.

In May 1992, when the FBE was founded, I was an Erasmus student. That experience played a decisive role in shaping me and making me feel, first and foremost, a European citizen.

The bonds forged back then with the other law students at the University of Poitiers still endure today.

And it is impressive to see how also the bonds the Federation has forged, and the legacy of those who worked for the FBE, still endure today; and thanks to the commitment of these Colleagues, thanks to their vision and their experience – which remains fundamental to this day – we can have a clear vision of our future commitments.

We cannot deny that the times we are living in are extremely complicated.

The Bar Associations and our profession are going through a delicate and difficult period.

On the other hand, there are many challenges, and intensive action is required, calling for unity amongst us all, from the defence of **the rule of law** – which is achieved through various means, I'll mention just two of them:

- ◆ Unity amongst the Bar Associations thanks to organisations such as the FBE, bringing citizens closer to the public's understanding of the core work we carry out.
- ◆ The promotion and development of lawyers' skills and training. This work, in my view, is closely linked to the protection of the rule of law and is carried out through the committees and is closely linked to the tasks that concern us and for which the Federation was founded.

The role of the professional bodies in defending and promoting the culture of the rule of law within society is one of the topics to be discussed at the **forthcoming Congress in Antalya**, and it will be interesting to hear practical reflections and ideas on how to put this principle into practice. I hope there will be a large turnout of delegates.

Finally, last but not least.

I have been fortunate enough to get to know the General Secretaries who preceded me, and I must thank them wholeheartedly for their generosity in sharing their experience in a spirit of genuine collaboration.

I will do my best, hoping that my best will be enough. **(Lucia Fabbri, FBE Secretary General)** ◀



FBE COMMISSIONS: **Looking Back, Looking Forward**

As the current term of the FBE Commissions draws to a close, their Presidents were invited to reflect on their achievements and share their views on future priorities. Below, we present selected responses highlighting their work and the key areas they believe their Commissions should focus on in the years ahead.

FBE New Technologies Commission: looking back on the 2024–2026 term

Dr Maria Dymitruk, President of the FBE New Technologies Commission

1. What achievement of your Commission during this term are you most proud of?

If I have to choose one, it is the way the Commission turned the topic of generative AI into something FBE members can actually use in their daily practice, rather than into another set of declarations.

Two strands stand out.

- ◆ The first is our Guidelines on the responsible use of generative artificial intelligence by lawyers (<https://www.fbe.org/nt-commissions-guidelines-on-genai/>). During the 2024–2026 term the Guidelines were updated, translated into several national languages and distributed through every channel available to us, so that colleagues in the Member Bars could rely on them regardless of their working language. In 2026 we built on that with the practical series “Deep

Fakes in the Courtroom”, which addresses the identification of synthetic content, digital evidence, the applicable legal frameworks and the transparency obligations under the AI Act, including the very concrete situation in which a client provides deepfake material or the opposing party seeks to introduce such material as evidence.

- ◆ The second is the redesign of our flagship International Legal Tech Competition. After several years of the previous format, in 2025 we rebuilt it as a legal prompting competition using generative AI tools, with the ethical use of technology as one of the principal assessment criteria. Each year a dozen representatives of Bars from across the FBE take part, and the onsite finals have travelled with the Federation: Bilbao in 2024, Lucca in 2025 and, on 19 November 2026, Verona. It has become, in practice, a European platform bringing together lawyers, trainee lawyers, law students and Member Bars around the competences that the profession now genuinely needs.
- ◆ I would add, as the institutional backbone of both strands, the Commission’s involvement in research projects funded by the European Commission under the Justice Programme: SCAN II and CREA II during the earlier part of the term, and subsequently DEUCE (an IT platform for cross-border enforcement of judgments), CREA III (predictive justice and digitalisation in family law disputes) and IDEA (digitalisation and predictive algorithms in labour law disputes). Within each project we organised educational events open free of charge to all FBE members, including the hybrid conference “Generative AI in the Justice System” in Barcelona and the webinar on cross-border enforcement and the DEUCE platform in February 2026. The Commission also joined a global, non-commercial study on the use of AI in legal practice conducted by Maastricht University, the University of Wrocław, SWPS University and the Jagiellonian University.

2. What issue should remain a priority for the Commission in the next term?

The move from principles to operationalisation. The main questions facing our profession are no longer whether lawyers may use AI, but how to do so in a way that is compatible with professional secrecy, the independence of the lawyer, the quality of legal services and the fundamental rights of clients.

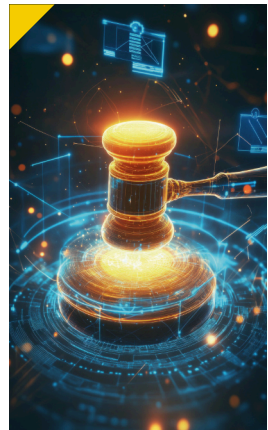
Concretely, I see four priorities.

- ◆ First, the practical application of the AI Act to legal practice, including transparency obligations and the rapid arrival of agentic systems that act rather than merely draft.
- ◆ Second, deepfakes, digital evidence and the authenticity of material used in proceedings, which is where the credibility of court fact-finding is now most exposed; our current one-pagers are intended to be consolidated into a comprehensive report.
- ◆ Third, professional secrecy and confidentiality in the use of AI tools, an area where Member Bars are being asked for guidance faster than guidance is being produced.
- ◆ Fourth, the impact of technology on access to justice, which is the reason the Federation became interested in these questions in the first place.

And one cross-cutting priority: everything the Commission produces should remain practical and available in as many national languages as we can manage. That is what makes the difference between a document that is read and a document that is filed.

3. If you could leave your successor with one recommendation, what would it be?

Produce usable things quickly, and never work alone. In this field the regulatory and technological landscape changes faster than any two-year work programme. A short one-pager published while the question is still open is worth more to our colleagues than a perfect report published a year later. At the same time, the Commission's reach has always come from co-operation: with other FBE Commissions (the Intellectual Property and Access to Justice Commissions have been essential partners in the Competition), with Member Bars willing to host events and finals, with academic institutions, and with European research consortia, which bring both funding and an audience far beyond our own membership. A successor who keeps that network alive, and who trusts the Commission's members to lead individual projects, will have everything needed to continue the work. ◀



FBE Mediation Commission

Carles García Roqueta, President

1. What achievement of your Commission during this term are you most proud of?

The dissemination of the work carried out by the Bar Associations in the field of mediation across different countries, with the commitment to collaboration through the sharing of up to date information by and the knowledge regarding new developments.

The creation and annual presentation of the ADR Awards, in different categories, recognizing the outstanding professionals, projects, and services developed by Bar Associations. 1st Award: “Best Mediation Institution”, 2nd Award: “Best Mediator”, 3rd Award “Best Mediation Publication.”

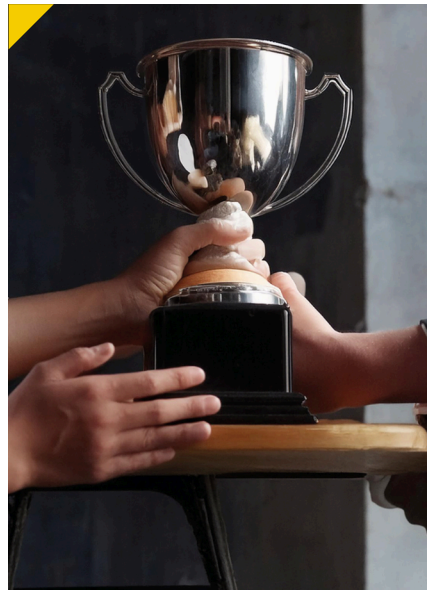
The establishment of a Registry of Mediation and ADR Centers of European Bar Associations, which we encourage to continue expanding through the creation of new services and centers, providing a shared repository of information and resources.

2. What issue should remain a priority for the Commission in the next term?

To maintain our outreach efforts and engage with Bar Associations that do not yet have ADR Centers or mediation services.

3. If you could leave your successor with one recommendation, what would it be?

Continuing to work on expanding knowledge and awareness regarding ADR and its use. ◀



FBE Human Rights Commission

Artur Wierzbicki, Chair of the Human Rights Commission

1. What achievement of your Commission during this term are you most proud of?

I am most proud of our support for lawyers at risk in Colombia through the organisation of the Colombia Caravana delegation, which took place from 21 to 31 August. The delegation comprised 19 delegates from several countries, including representatives of FBE Bar Associations.

The delegation visited five regions, met with lawyers and their clients, and heard directly about the threats and attacks they face. We also heard about cases brought before the Constitutional Court on behalf of indigenous communities, women's collectives and others whose livelihoods and environments have been threatened or destroyed by international mining interests.

2. What issue should remain a priority for the Commission in the next term?

Iran should remain a priority for the Commission in the next term. The resistance to the regime is working towards the election of a constituent assembly to establish democracy in Iran. Those involved insist that these changes must be brought about by the people of Iran themselves, without war or intervention by external forces. They face repression, arrest, imprisonment, torture and execution.

3. If you could leave your successor with one recommendation, what would it be?

My recommendation to my successor would be to ensure the continuation of the FBE Young Lawyers' Human Rights Competition by encouraging more Bar Associations to become involved. ◀



The Unaccompanied Minors Commission: its work and forthcoming report

Céline Squaratti and Livio Natale

Joint Presidents of the Unaccompanied Minors Commission

1. What achievement of your Commission during this term are you most proud of?

We are particularly proud of the General Outline on “Infrastructure to host unaccompanied minors (UM)”, which we have just finalised. This was a significant collaborative project for the Commission following our previous work. It brought together the experience and perspectives of our members from different jurisdictions.

2. What issue should remain a priority for the Commission in the next term?

We believe the Commission should continue its work on UM by identifying a new topic for a future General Outline. This would allow us to build on the work already carried out and further develop a useful comparative perspective on the legal and practical challenges faced by UM across Europe.



3. If you could leave your successor with one recommendation, what would it be?

Our recommendation would be to continue working in the same spirit. We have a very cohesive, active and motivated group, and this dynamic should be preserved. In particular, we would recommend continuing to schedule meetings approximately every two months, as this regular contact has been very helpful in maintaining the group’s cohesion, engagement and motivation. ◀



ARTICLES AND FEATURES

A Lottery of protection: how Europe cares for unaccompanied minors

FBE Unaccompanied Minors Committee

An unaccompanied minor (“UAM”) is a child under the age of 18, who arrives in a State of which they are not a citizen without a parent or other legal guardian responsible for their care.

In 2024, a quarter of first-time asylum applications in the European Union (“EU”) were filed by minors, totalling 234,670 applications. Among these applications, 36,290 were lodged by UAMs applying by themselves, which is fewer than the 43,060 applications filed in 2023, but still a significant number, especially given the specific needs of UAMs in asylum proceedings.¹ This pressure also is felt at the national level; for instance, in France, the child welfare services (*Aide sociale à l'enfance*) received close to 400,000 young people in 2024, roughly double the number recorded four years earlier.²

There is no reliable figure for the global number of unaccompanied and separated children, as data-tracking gaps mean that most countries do

¹ European Commission, Eurostat, *Children in Migration – Asylum Applicants, Statistics Explained* (data for 2024), https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Children_in_migration_-_asylum_applicants (last visited 28 August 2026).

² Direction de la recherche, des études, de l'évaluation et des statistiques (DREES), *Aide sociale à l'enfance: données 2024*, dataset published 4 September 2025, https://drees.solidarites-sante.gouv.fr/publications-jeux-de-donnees/jeux-de-donnees/250904_DATA-aide-sociale-a-lenfance (last visited 28 August 2026).



Image generated using [Google Gemini](#) (Nano Banana 2); it does not depict an identifiable person

not systematically record how many children travel or seek protection alone. However, the available data point to a substantial, long-term concern; between 2014 and 2024, in the EU alone, close to 379,000 children were recorded as unaccompanied when applying for asylum applicants in the European Union alone.³ Given the significant number of UAMs seeking international protection in the EU, it is important to understand how these children are cared for in different host states.

Many of these children have made arduous journeys, traversing multiple countries before lodging an international protection claim. The driving force leading children to leave their respective countries of origin often is conflict; in 2024, children from Syria and Afghanistan were among the top three nationalities claiming asylum in the EU.⁴

As these journeys often involve multiple European States, a lawyer representing a UAM in one State must deal with institutions and infrastructure located elsewhere in Europe on a routine basis.

³ UNICEF, *5 Facts: Unaccompanied and Separated Children*, 2025, pp. 2–3, https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/5-facts_UASC-4.pdf (last visited 14 September 2026).

⁴ European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), *Data Analysis of Unaccompanied Minors in 2024, August 2025*, https://www.euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2025-08/2025_factsheet36_unaccompanied_minors.pdf (last visited 28 August 2026).

With this in mind, the Committee decided to draft a practical guide to the institutions and infrastructure servicing UAMs in multiple European States.

This differs from the Committee's previous guide, published in May 2023, which outlined the legal procedures UAMs go through in different European States from arrival to possible deportation, and also examined how these States, which all have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child ("**CRC**"),⁵ apply its principles and protections in their legal frameworks.

Concretely, in this guide, previewed here, the Committee addresses the next question what protection and care is offered by each host State, and what infrastructure is in place for UAMs.

Accommodation: discrepancies between host States

For the EU Member States covered by this guide, Directive (EU) 2024/1346 (the recast Reception Conditions Directive) sets out a clear order of preference: an unaccompanied minor should be housed with adult relatives; where none are available, they should be house with a foster family and, failing that, in a facility designed for minors; as a last resort they may be house in other accommodation suitable for a child. UAMs aged 16+ may be placed alongside adult applicants, but only when this is considered to be in their best interests. Siblings are to be kept together and relocations kept to a minimum.

However, in practice, the accommodation available to a UAM may depend less on the rules set forth in this Directive, and more on the practice of the EU host State.

Nevertheless, Switzerland, which is not a member of the EU and, therefore, is not bound by that Directive, provides, one of the most structured systems identified in this comparison. As Switzerland is a federal State, this system is not present everywhere. However, in the canton of Zurich, minors aged 12 and over are housed in dedicated centres (the Lilienberg home and the Aubuggweg reception centre) in single-sex rooms shared by two minors, with round-the-clock supervision, an assigned counsellor to assist with daily life and education and, subject to availability, a library, a computer room and a painting workshop.

⁵ Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted 20 November 1989, 1577 UNTS 3, Preamble; Declaration of the Rights of the Child, UN General Assembly Resolution 1386 (XIV), 20 November 1959.



Conversely, in Spain, similarly aged minors face a very different reality. Although the law provides for a stay of roughly 45 days in a first-reception centre before permanent placement, in reality, overcrowding routinely extends that stay to several months.

The contrast illustrates how differences in legal frameworks, institutional arrangements and available capacity can produce markedly different outcomes. Similar structural weaknesses were seen across all five States that the Committee analysed; these were a shortage of trained social workers, uneven standards across facilities between regions, administrative delays that extend first-reception stays and, limited housing options and support for young people approaching adulthood.

Education: a right on paper, but not always in reality

For the four EU Member States analysed in this guide, the Directive (EU) 2024/1346 (the recast Reception Conditions Directive) fixes concrete obligations, beyond those in the CRC.⁶ It requires Member States to grant minors access to the education system as soon as possible and prohibits postponing that access for more than two months from the date on which the application for international protection was lodged, taking school holidays into account. Education must, as a rule, be provided within the general education system. It may be provided outside that system only as

⁶ Cf. supra.



a temporary measure, for a maximum period of one month.⁷ Preparatory classes, including language classes, must be provided where necessary to facilitate minors' access to, and participation in, the general education system.

The Directive, like the accommodation hierarchy above, binds only the EU Member States; Switzerland is free to set its own timeline. Yet all five States in this comparison are bound by the same underlying guarantee: the minor's right to education, without exception and regardless of legal status, which has its origins in Article 28 CRC.

In Spain, access to education is relatively straightforward: registration in the municipal register (*Padrón*) is done in a single administrative step and grants access to school regardless of immigration status, with linguistic and academic support provided when needed. Yet even this near-universal access becomes more limited as minors approach adulthood. UAMs over 16 often are steered towards short-term vocational tracks, rather than ordinary academic pathways, as child protection authorities prioritise a fast route into the labour market over continued schooling.

Italy has adopted an ambitious framework, at least on paper. Yet its implementation reveals similar limitations. Minors placed in education after the school year already has begun, many of whom are over 16, often are enrolled in Provincial Centres for Adult Education, rather than in ordinary

⁷ Art 16(2), Directive (EU) 2024/1346 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection (recast), OJ L, 22 May 2024, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1346/oj/eng> (last visited 28 August 2026).

schools, in contravention of the principle of common schooling and hindering UAMs' socialisation with their Italian peers.

Although these two national frameworks diverge in their implementation, the commonality is the erosion of protection as the child nears adulthood, due not to a change in the legal framework or in the guarantee itself, but to the extent to which the States continue to give it full effect. Therefore, when it comes to UAMs' right to education, the decisive factor is not the host country, but the time remaining before the child turns 18.

The administrative maze: who holds the key?

Typically, a child is not able to navigate administrative and legal procedures alone. Therefore, a guardian, legal representative or public authority must be able to act on behalf of the child. The manner in which such an individual or authority is appointed shows the priorities of the system.

In Italy, the Zampa Law established a guardianship model intended to foster a close and personal relationship between the guardian and the minor. Under that model, trained private citizens may serve as a volunteer guardian, but only for up to three UAMs, unless specific and relevant reasons justify them being appointed as guardian of additional UAMs. For UAMs seeking asylum, the law requires the appointment of a guardian within 48 hours of notification by the police to the Juvenile Court and the Public Prosecutor's Office. Italy also has established financial support for volunteer guardians, including reimbursing employers for part of the cost of paid leave taken to perform guardianship duties.

This model is designed to ensure that guardianship involves more than simply the management of administrative tasks. That said, delays in appointments, high caseloads and the delegation of certain responsibilities may limit the continuity and personal relationship that the system is intended to provide.

Germany follows a more centrally coordinated model. When a UAM is identified, the competent local Youth Welfare Office (*Jugendamt*) takes the child into temporary custody and assesses the minor's individual needs. The case then may be referred on through a national distribution mechanism coordinated by the Federal Office of Administration (*Bundesverwaltungsamt*). This mechanism seeks to distribute responsibility amongst Germany's sixteen federal states, while taking account of the minor's welfare and circumstances.

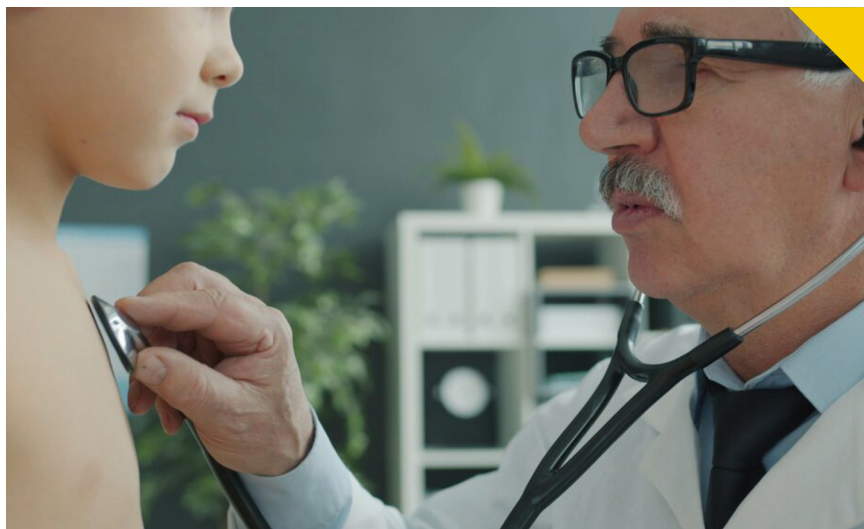
The system is designed to avoid responsibility being concentrated in certain regions (Länder). However, the Committee has identified persistent challenges, including rising arrival numbers and shortages of trained staff. In several regions, those pressures have affected the quality and consistency of care available to UAMs.

The two systems reflect different administrative priorities; one places particular emphasis on the individual relationship between the guardian and child, while the other prioritises the coordinated distribution of responsibility across a federal system. However, both illustrate a broader challenge identified by the Committee, that the effective enjoyment of legal guarantees depends on the availability of sufficiently trained professionals, who are able to provide UAMs with continuous, individual support.

Healthcare: access, registration and invisible needs

UAMs often arrive in a host country with both physical health needs and psychological vulnerabilities, which may not be immediately apparent.

In Spain, access to healthcare may depend on obtaining a certain administrative status only available after registration, which is not given immediately. Although, in principle, healthcare is universal, the study identifies



a two-tier structure in access; emergency care is available before administrative registration, whereas full access to primary and preventive care generally follows registration.

A minor whose age is still under assessment by the Public Prosecutor's Office may lack the fixed address required for registration, as they would not yet have been entered in the child protection system. A 2019 Resolution provides for a document enabling access to healthcare for persons who are not legally resident in Spain, but the procedure commonly requires proof of registered residence for the preceding three months. Therefore, UAMs whose status has not yet been recognised are only can access emergency hospital care.

Germany offers a more integrated route to healthcare, once a minor has entered the youth welfare system. The Youth Welfare Office (*Jugendamt*) responsible for the minor must ensure access to healthcare throughout the child's placement and may cover the costs of psychotherapy, including interpretation, when necessary.

The Committee's study also identifies measures intended to address shortages in mental health services. Where no accredited psychotherapist is available despite reasonable efforts, a minor may be reimbursed for treatment provided by a suitably licensed therapist who is not accredited by the statutory health-insurance system.

In both of the aforementioned countries, administrative recognition is a decisive factor in securing effective access to healthcare. Yet, recognition alone does not guarantee access to psychological support. Across all five States, such support is available in principle, but this is not automatic; access may depend on a referral, a formal request or the timely identification of a child's needs by a professional. This illustrates the difference between formal availability and effective access to psychological support.

Closing the gap

The Committee's comparison shows how protection operates once a host State assumes responsibility for a UAM. With respect to accommodation, education, administrative support and healthcare, the same pattern emerges; rights may be recognised in law, but their effective enjoyment depends on the capacity of institutions to deliver timely, individualised and coordinated support. The five States examined share a common

commitment to the CRC, but do not provide protection through identical institutional arrangements or achieve equivalent outcomes.

The Committee's forthcoming publication provides a substantially more detailed analysis. It includes five country-specific annexes covering France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Switzerland, each structured around the same four themes: accommodation, education, administrative infrastructure and healthcare. It also provides practitioners with directories of relevant authorities and institutions and ways to contact them, which may assist practitioners acting in cross-border cases involving UAMs. As these systems are subject to frequent legal, political and institutional change, practitioners should verify their current status with the competent authorities or, where appropriate, with members of the Committee.

Crucially, the publication identifies best practices drawn from the five systems studied. The purpose is not to present a single model that can be applied unchanged in every jurisdiction, but rather to provide lawyers and policymakers with practical examples of measures that may strengthen the protection of UAMs and help give concrete effect to their rights.

Italy's volunteer guardianship model, France's territorial redistribution mechanism, Germany's integration of UAMs into the youth welfare system, Spain's *Padrón*-based route to education and services and the specialised accommodation models developed in certain Swiss cantons all offer useful points to compare best practice. At the same time, the study demonstrates that no system is immune from fluctuating migration flows, staff shortages or fragmented responsibilities across regions and institutions.

Therefore, the forthcoming publication is intended not only to act as a comparative study, but also to serve as a practical working tool for lawyers assisting UAMs. It will enable practitioners to identify relevant structures across borders, understand the practical routes by which a child may access protection, and draw on the Committee's comparative findings and best practices when advocating for the child's best interests.

A child's access to protection should not depend on the protections offered by the host State they happen to land in, differences in administrative formalities or the time remaining before they turn 18. ◀

Artificial Intelligence, Fundamental Rights and the Legal Profession: The European Regulatory Approach

Taulant Troshani, PhD in Law

Izabela Konopacka, Attorney at Law, President of the IP Law Commission and Member of the FBE New Technologies Commission

I. The European Artificial Intelligence Act (AI Act)

The aim of the European Regulation on Artificial Intelligence is to ensure that the use and development of AI systems respect fundamental rights, European values and safety requirements. The Regulation was approved by the European Parliament in March 2024, adopted by the Council in May 2024 and published in the Official Journal on 12 July 2024 as Regulation (EU) 2024/1689. Also known as the AI Act, it is the world's first comprehensive legislative framework governing the development, placing on the market and use of AI systems.¹

European policy-makers committed² to a human-centred approach to AI so that people in Europe can benefit from technologies developed and used in line with the EU's values and principles.

The AI Act enshrines in EU law, in its Article 3(1), a definition of AI systems aligned with the revised definition agreed by the OECD:³

An AI system is a machine-based system designed to operate with varying levels of autonomy and that may exhibit adaptiveness after deployment and that, for explicit or implicit objectives, infers, from the input it receives, how to generate outputs such as predictions, content, recommendations, or decisions that can influence physical or virtual environments.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence (Artificial Intelligence Act), OJ L, 2024/1689, 12.7.2024, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj>.

² European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Building Trust in Human-Centric Artificial Intelligence*, Brussels, 8.4.2019, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52019DC0168&from=BG>.

³ Updates to the OECD's definition of an AI system explained, <https://oecd.ai/en/wonk/ai-system-definition-update>.

However, the growing use of AI has also led to concerns about its possible effects on fundamental rights and user safety, especially when these technologies are integrated into everyday products and services. Certain AI systems may, for example, create risks for rights protected under the EU Charter, including equality, freedom of expression, human dignity, privacy and personal data protection.⁴

This regulation is based on the risks that AI systems may pose, categorising them according to their impact, from minimal to unacceptable risks. Its aim is also to protect citizens and limit harmful uses, to encourage innovation, particularly among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and to build confidence in these rapidly expanding new applications.⁵

In its Impact Assessment of the regulation on artificial intelligence,⁶ the European Commission identified several problems raised by the development and use of AI systems, due to their specific characteristics, namely: (i) opacity (limited ability of the human mind to understand how certain AI systems operate), (ii) complexity, (iii) continuous adaptation and unpredictability, (iv) autonomous behaviour, and (v) functional dependence on data and on the quality of data.⁷

The European regulation classifies the risks posed by different artificial intelligence systems into four main categories:

- ◆ **Unacceptable risks** arise from practices such as social scoring by public or private actors (i.e., evaluating or classifying individuals or groups based on social behaviour or personal traits, resulting in detrimental or unfavourable treatment of those people); the exploitation of people's vulnerability (children or vulnerable groups) to influence their behaviour due to age, disability, or social or economic situations, causing significant harm; remote real-time biometric identification in publicly accessible spaces for law enforcement

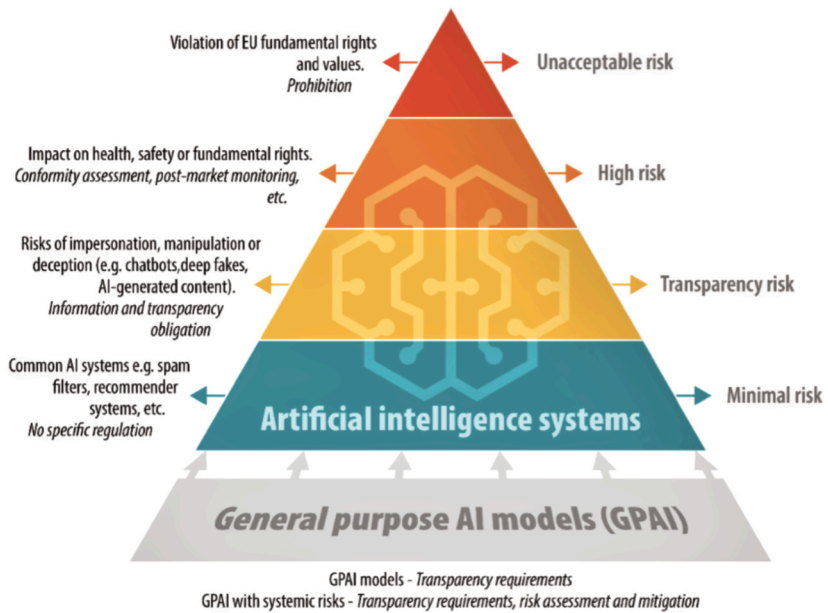
⁴ High-Level Expert Group, *Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy AI*, 2019, <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/ethics-guidelines-trustworthy-ai>.

⁵ M-L. Rols, J. Blain et A. Lacombe, *Le Règlement européen sur l'intelligence artificielle : publics concernés, dates clés, conséquences pour les entreprises*, <https://www.entreprises.gouv.fr/decryptages-de-nos-experts/le-reglement-europeen-sur-lintelligence-artificielle-publics-concernes>.

⁶ *Impact Assessment of the Regulation on Artificial intelligence*, <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/impact-assessment-regulation-artificial-intelligence>.

⁷ European Parliament, *Briefing, EU Legislation in Progress, Artificial intelligence act*, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/698792/EPRS_BRI\(2021\)698792_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/698792/EPRS_BRI(2021)698792_EN.pdf).

EU AI act risk-based approach



Source: European Parliament, *Briefing...*, op. cit.

purposes, save for narrowly defined exceptions (searching for victims of abduction, sexual exploitation or missing persons, preventing certain substantial and imminent threats to safety or identifying suspects in serious crimes); emotion recognition in the workplace and in education institutions; untargeted scraping of facial images to build facial recognition databases; biometric categorisation inferring sensitive characteristics; and predictive policing based solely on profiling. These practices have been prohibited since 2 February 2025 because of their impact on respect for fundamental rights and European values.⁸

- ◆ **High-risk** refers to AI systems that have an impact on health, safety or fundamental rights, such as those used in the fields of justice, education, employment or biometrics, and are subject to strict requirements. There are several conditions that these AI systems must meet, such as the requirement to undergo a conformity

⁸ High-level summary of the AI Act, <https://artificialintelligenceact.eu/high-level-summary/>.

assessment before being placed on the market and to be monitored during use, including through human oversight.

- ◆ **Limited risk** refers to AI systems such as chatbots or generative tools (capable of creating images or videos), which must inform users that they are interacting with an AI and that the content generated is artificial and produced by an AI. These AI systems may pose specific risks of impersonation or deception, irrespective of whether they qualify as high-risk AI systems or not. Such systems are subject to information and transparency requirements under Article 50, applicable from 2 August 2026.⁹ This is also part of the principle of transparency set out in the regulation.
- ◆ **Minimal or no risk** refers to AI systems that pose little or no risk when used and are not subject to any specific obligations under the Regulation.

The EU AI Regulation provides for the establishment of regulatory sandboxes, which allow companies to test their products or services in real-world conditions, under the supervision of a regulator and with its guidance.¹⁰

National authorities must establish at least one AI regulatory sandbox at national level (by 2 August 2027, following the 2026 amendments) to facilitate the development and testing of innovative AI systems under strict regulatory oversight.¹¹

This regulation applies to all companies, organisations, associations or public authorities that supply, use or distribute artificial intelligence systems.

This applies to entities based in the European Union, as well as those based outside the EU whose products are used or distributed within the EU. The regulation is primarily aimed at providers of high-risk AI systems within the EU.

Before marketing their products, these organisations must first carry out a conformity assessment (in most cases an internal one, in certain cases with the involvement of a notified body), draw up a declaration of conformity, affix the CE marking and register in the EU database, which contains information on high-risk AI systems.

⁹ European Parliament, *Briefing...*, *op. cit.*

¹⁰ M-L. Rols, J. Blain et A. Lacombe, *Le Règlement européen...*, *op. cit.*

¹¹ European Parliament, *Briefing...*, *op. cit.*

These companies must also put in place a risk management system and ensure data governance, including the examination of training, validation and testing data for possible biases and appropriate measures to detect, prevent and mitigate them.

To ensure compliance at every stage of the product lifecycle, companies will need to establish technical documentation and a quality management system, as well as ensure the traceability and transparency of AI systems, and maintain human oversight of decisions made by AI.¹²

These companies are also required to ensure the robustness, accuracy and cybersecurity of high-risk AI systems.

A code of practice for general-purpose AI models,¹³ drawn up by independent experts in a multi-stakeholder process facilitated by the European AI Office and published in July 2025, helps providers of such models demonstrate compliance with their obligations under the Regulation.

Furthermore, from 2 August 2025, new obligations apply to providers of general-purpose AI models, particularly regarding transparency and copyright issues.

Moreover, stricter requirements apply to general-purpose AI models posing systemic risks, which can have a major societal impact due to their capabilities, sophistication or widespread use.

Some commentators nevertheless warn that the complexity of the AI Act itself may create practical difficulties for companies and national authorities responsible for its implementation.¹⁴

The application of the Act relies on both national authorities and EU institutions. Each Member State must appoint at least one market surveillance authority and one notifying authority to oversee the enforcement of the rules. Entities that fail to comply with the Act may face significant financial penalties: up to EUR 35 million or 7% of total worldwide annual turnover for prohibited practices and up to EUR 15 million or 3% for most other infringements.¹⁵

¹² M-L. Rols, J. Blain et A. Lacombe, *Le Règlement européen...*, *op. cit.*

¹³ *The General-Purpose AI Code of Practice*, <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/contents-code-gpai>.

¹⁴ N. Sousa e Silva, *The Artificial Intelligence Act: Critical Overview*, pp. 1–2, <https://www.jipitec.eu/jipitec/article/view/418/421>.

¹⁵ European Parliament, *Briefing...*, *op. cit.*

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights has also warned that many providers and deployers of high-risk AI systems still do not know how to properly assess or mitigate risks affecting fundamental rights in practice.¹⁶

1.1. Timeline and the 2026 “Digital Omnibus”

The AI Act entered into force on 1 August 2024 and applies in stages: the prohibitions and the AI literacy obligation have applied since 2 February 2025, the rules on general-purpose AI models since 2 August 2025 and the transparency obligations of Article 50 since 2 August 2026. Regulation (EU) 2026/1744 (the “Digital Omnibus on AI”), in force since 27 July 2026, postponed the application of the requirements for the stand-alone high-risk systems listed in Annex III to 2 December 2027, and for high-risk AI covered by Annex I to 2 August 2028.¹⁷ The postponement does not alter the substance of the high-risk regime, but it extends the period in which AI tools used in justice and legal practice may be deployed before the full set of safeguards becomes enforceable.

1.2. The administration of justice as a high-risk area

Of particular importance for the legal profession is point 8 of Annex III, which classifies as high-risk AI systems intended to be used by a judicial authority, or on its behalf, to assist it in researching and interpreting facts and the law and in applying the law to a concrete set of facts, as well as systems used in a similar way in alternative dispute resolution.¹⁸ Recital 61 clarifies that this does not extend to purely ancillary administrative activities, such as the anonymisation of judicial decisions or communication between staff, and that AI tools may support the decision-making power of judges but should not replace it: the final decision-making must remain a human-driven activity.¹⁹

From the perspective of practitioners, the decisive distinction is that between AI assistance, which supports the human decision-maker, and

¹⁶ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, *Assessing High-Risk Artificial Intelligence: Fundamental Rights Risks*, Vienna 2025, p. 5 <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2025/assessing-high-risk-ai>.

¹⁷ Regulation (EU) 2026/1744 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 (Digital Omnibus on AI), published in the Official Journal on 24 July 2026, in force since 27 July 2026.

¹⁸ Annex III, point 8(a), and Article 6(2) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1689.

¹⁹ Recital 61 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1689.

algorithmic adjudication, in which the output of the system effectively determines the outcome. In practice, this distinction is not always easy to draw. A tool that merely “proposes” a division of assets or calculates a settlement range may, through automation bias, shape the result as decisively as a formal decision, particularly where the parties are not legally represented. The exception in Article 6(3), under which a system listed in Annex III is not considered high-risk where it does not materially influence the outcome of decision-making, should therefore be interpreted narrowly in the justice sector. Deployers that are public bodies or private entities providing public services must, moreover, carry out a fundamental rights impact assessment before putting such systems into use.²⁰

II. The Council of Europe: the Ethical Charter on AI in Judicial Systems and the Framework Convention on AI

For its part, the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) of the Council of Europe adopted, in December 2018, the first European document setting out ethical principles regarding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in judicial systems.²¹

The Charter is aimed at policymakers, legal practitioners and justice professionals to assist and guide them in managing the rapid development of AI within national legal proceedings.

The spirit of the Charter is that the use of AI in the justice system can help to improve the efficiency and quality of the courts’ work, provided that AI systems are used responsibly and in accordance with the principles set out in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Personal Data. The Charter, therefore, approaches AI as a support tool for judicial systems rather than as a substitute for human legal reasoning or judicial discretion.²²

According to the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice, the key principles to be observed in relation to AI and justice are:

²⁰ Articles 6(3), 26 and 27 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1689.

²¹ CEPEJ *European Ethical Charter on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in judicial systems and their environment*, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cepej/cepej-european-ethical-charter-on-the-use-of-artificial-intelligence-ai-in-judicial-systems-and-their-environment>.

²² *Ibidem*.

- ◆ **The principle of respect for fundamental rights** requires that artificial intelligence tools and services be implemented and used in a manner consistent with fundamental rights.
- ◆ **The principle of non-discrimination** requires public and private bodies to avoid discrimination in certain processes, particularly in criminal matters, and to refrain from perpetuating or exacerbating existing discrimination by aggregating or categorising data relating to groups or categories of people.²³ A frequently cited example is the COMPAS software, used in some US jurisdictions to assess the risk of reoffending of defendants in pre-trial and sentencing decisions, whose discriminatory effects against African-American defendants were highlighted in 2016, in particular by the investigative newsroom ProPublica.²⁴
- ◆ **The principle of quality and security** relates to the processing of data using machine learning on the basis of certified source data, and the integrity of this data should be guaranteed at every stage of the process by multidisciplinary teams comprising judges, IT specialists and social scientists.²⁵
- ◆ **The principle of transparency, impartiality and fairness** involves making data processing methodologies accessible and comprehensible, and allowing independent authorities or experts to carry out external audits.
- ◆ Finally, **the principle of “under user control”** requires that users be informed actors in control of their own choices. In particular, a judge should be able to refer at any time to the judicial decisions and data used to produce a result, while retaining the option to deviate from them in light of the specific circumstances of the case. Every user should be informed, in clear and understandable language, whether the solutions proposed by AI tools are binding or not, of the various options available, and of their right to legal advice and to take legal action.

²³ Direction des Droits de l'homme, Secrétariat de la Commission européenne, *Note de présentation, La Charte éthique européenne de la CEPEJ sur l'utilisation de l'intelligence artificielle (IA) dans les systèmes judiciaires et leur environnement*, 4 décembre 2018, <https://rm.coe.int/presentation-note-fr-for-publication-4-december-2018/16808f699e>.

²⁴ C. Barbaro, *La Charte éthique européenne de la CEPEJ sur l'utilisation de l'intelligence artificielle (IA) dans les systèmes judiciaires et dans leur environnement*, <https://experts-institute.eu/europe-de-la-justice/cepej/la-charte-ethique-europeenne-de-la-cepej-2/>.

²⁵ Direction des Droits de l'homme, Secrétariat de la Commission européenne, *Note de présentation...*, *op. cit.*

To ensure full compliance with the principle of equality of arms, the parties should have access to these tools, and in particular to the key elements of their operation, such as the algorithm and the data used. The input of legal experts will be essential in order to clarify how the tool operates, how it produces its results, and thus to ensure a genuine adversarial process.²⁶

AI can be used in civil, commercial and administrative matters to assist legal research, analyse case law and support online dispute resolution. The CCBE has also underlined that generative AI tools are increasingly used by lawyers for legal research, document analysis, drafting assistance and translation.²⁷ These tools may help connect legislation, regulations, doctrine and judicial decisions more efficiently, provided that reliable data and transparent algorithms are used and that access to a judge always remains possible. In this context, the European Ethical Charter on the use of AI in judicial systems sets out guiding principles for the integration of AI into justice systems and is intended for policy-makers, courts, legal professionals and private companies involved in the development of such technologies.²⁸

Beyond soft law, the Council of Europe adopted in May 2024 the Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law (CETS No. 225), opened for signature in Vilnius on 5 September 2024. It is the first legally binding international treaty in this field. The Convention requires the parties to ensure that activities within the lifecycle of AI systems are consistent with human rights, democracy and the rule of law, including respect for judicial independence and access to justice, and to provide effective remedies and procedural safeguards. The European Union ratified the Convention on 15 May 2026.²⁹

²⁶ C. Barbaro, *La Charte éthique...*, op. cit.

²⁷ CCBE guide on the use of generative AI by lawyers, 2 October 2025, https://www.ccbe.eu/fileadmin/speciality_distribution/public/documents/IT_LAW/ITL_Guides_recommendations/EN_ITL_20251002_CCBE-guide-on-the-use-of-the-use-of-generative-AI-for-lawyers.pdf.

²⁸ C. Barbaro, *The European Ethical Charter on the use of AI in judicial systems and their environment*, <https://rm.coe.int/presentation-ia-charter-jan19-most-comprehensive/168092d5df>.

²⁹ Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, CETS No. 225, Vilnius, 5 September 2024, Articles 5, 14 and 15; Council of Europe, *European Union ratifies the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence*, 15 May 2026, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/artificial-intelligence/-/european-union-ratifies-the-council-of-europe-framework-convention-on-artificial-intelligence>.

Alongside the AI Act, it adds a rights-based layer to the European framework, which is particularly relevant to justice systems.

III. Generative Artificial Intelligence and the Legal Profession

As for generative artificial intelligence systems, their distinctive feature, as their name suggests, lies in their ability to generate (rather than create in the strict sense) content, be it text, an image, sound or a video, in response to a user's query formulated in natural language. In recent years, the development of generative AI tools has considerably accelerated public and professional debates concerning the future of legal practice and the protection of fundamental rights.³⁰

This technology is based on the “large language model” (LLM), which is capable of processing natural language, without necessarily understanding it. The key characteristic distinguishing generative AI from other AI systems lies in its ability to produce new content in the form of text, image, audio or video.³¹ The LLM perceives the data behind the words and returns other data inspired by the billions of pages it has ingested. With generative artificial intelligence, these LLMs are now also capable of contextualising the meaning of a word, that is to say, differentiating it according to the structure of the sentence and the surrounding words, and determining its relative importance.³²

Generative artificial intelligence is able to produce content because it learns how sentences are structured and uses this knowledge to predict words according to their context. In practice, it functions as a system that anticipates language patterns and, by doing so, creates texts that can resemble human expression, especially in writing, even though they are generated through statistical models rather than human thought itself.

Generative artificial intelligence does not, in itself, give meaning to the result produced; for this reason, it is unable to assess the relevance of its own response, which is merely a sequence of probabilities calculated

³⁰ CCBE guide on the use of generative AI..., *op. cit.*

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 3.

³² Ch-A. Frassa, M.P. de la Gontrie, *L'intelligence artificielle générative et les métiers du droit : agir plutôt que subir, Rapport d'information n° 216 (2024–2025), déposé le 18 décembre 2024*, <https://www.senat.fr/rap/r24-216/r24-2162.html>.

from the data it is fed. Only the human user gives meaning to the content generated by the model.

The main limitation, and the best documented one, is the risk of hallucination. In practice, hallucinations are erroneous results or imaginary facts that have no basis in the training data. These hallucinations stem from the probabilistic mechanism used to predict the next word, which may lead the tool to invent, for example, quotations or legal precedents.³³

In the following example, the free version of ChatGPT was asked “what Article 19 of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen was about”.³⁴ This is, of course, a trick question, as the Declaration contains only 17 articles. The tool failed to realise this and gave an incorrect answer, mixing up Articles 15 and 16 of the Declaration.

De quoi parle l'article 19 de la déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen ?



L'article 19 de la Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen de 1789 porte sur l'imputabilité des agents publics et la gestion des affaires publiques. Voici le texte de l'article :

"Toute société dans laquelle la garantie des droits n'est pas assurée, ni la séparation des pouvoirs déterminée, n'a point de Constitution."

Cet article ne fait donc pas directement référence à un concept moderne tel que la liberté d'expression ou d'autres droits individuels, mais plutôt à un principe fondamental de l'organisation politique : une société ne peut être considérée comme constitutionnelle que si deux conditions sont remplies :

1. **La garantie des droits** : Les droits des citoyens doivent être protégés de manière effective par les institutions.
2. **La séparation des pouvoirs** : Une distinction claire doit exister entre les pouvoirs législatif, exécutif et judiciaire, garantissant un fonctionnement équilibré et empêchant les abus de pouvoir.

Ce principe s'inscrit dans le contexte des Lumières et des réflexions sur la limitation du pouvoir absolu, avec des philosophes comme Montesquieu influençant la rédaction de ce texte fondamental.



³³ Conseil national des barreaux, *Guide pratique – Utilisation des systèmes d'intelligence artificielle générative* – Septembre 2024, p. 21, https://encyclopedia.avocat.fr/GEIDEFile/CNB_GT_IntelligenceArtificielle_2024.pdf?Archive=132021395020&File=Telecharger-%5Fle%5Fguide%5Ffici&verif=480312480318473152481421469030450537476306480304488827470114.

³⁴ Ch-A. Frassa, M.P de la Gontrie, *L'intelligence artificielle..., op. cit.*

If the same question is put to ChatGPT today, the tool gives the correct answer. This is not because the tool has “learned” from the earlier query (such models do not learn from individual conversations in real time), but because newer versions of the model have since been released and, in some cases, the tool now consults web sources. A single correct answer therefore says little about the reliability of the tool in the next case.

De quoi parle l'article 19 de la déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen?

Il n'existe pas d'« article 19 » dans la Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen de 1789, car ce texte ne comporte que 17 articles.

Souvent, les personnes confondent avec :

- l'article 11 de la Déclaration de 1789, qui concerne la liberté d'expression :
« La libre communication des pensées et des opinions est un des droits les plus précieux de l'homme... »

ou avec :

- l'article 19 de la Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme, adopté par l'ONU en 1948, qui porte justement sur la liberté d'opinion et d'expression.

Cet article 19 dispose :

« Tout individu a droit à la liberté d'opinion et d'expression... »

Il protège notamment :

- le droit d'avoir des opinions sans être inquiété ;
- la liberté de rechercher, recevoir et diffuser des informations ;
- la liberté d'expression par tout moyen et sans frontières.

Donc si tu as entendu parler de « l'article 19 des droits de l'homme », il s'agit très probablement de celui de la Déclaration universelle de 1948, et non de la Déclaration française de 1789.

+ Poser une question

Instant ▾



ChatGPT peut commettre des erreurs. Il est recommandé de vérifier les informations importantes. Voir les [préférences en matière de cookies](#).

These hallucinations demonstrate that the reliability of generative artificial intelligence tools, even when they draw on a vast database, is never guaranteed. For this reason, several professional organisations insist that AI-generated results should always remain subject to human verification and professional judgment.³⁵ Furthermore, generative artificial intelligence should not be confused with a search engine, which would more clearly indicate the absence of a result for a given query.

³⁵ Les Collections du Barreau de Paris, *Livre blanc sur l'Intelligence Artificielle, Un an d'innovation au Barreau de Paris*, Octobre 2025, <https://azfrstooxapc1.blob.core.windows.net/actualites/Livre%20Blanc%20de%20l'IA.pdf>.

Hallucinations are particularly dangerous in case law research, where AI tools have suggested judgments that do not exist at all. For this reason, their responses must always be verified. In a personal injury case against an airline, a New York lawyer submitted a brief citing six judicial decisions that did not exist:³⁶ the lawyer had misused ChatGPT by treating it as a search engine (which it is not) and failing to verify the results it produced.³⁷

Such incidents are neither isolated nor confined to the United States. In June 2025, the Divisional Court of the High Court of England and Wales, ruling on two cases in which fictitious authorities had been put before the courts, warned that freely available generative AI tools are not capable of conducting reliable legal research, and that lawyers who rely on them without verification expose themselves to regulatory sanctions, contempt proceedings and, in the most serious cases, criminal liability.³⁸

Consequently, while warnings displayed by AI tools about the risk of error are useful, the responsibility for verifying every result rests with the legal professional who uses the tool.

The risk of hallucinations can, however, be reduced by feeding the AI with data pre-selected by legal publishers, so that its responses are based on trusted and reliable databases. This technique, known as retrieval-augmented generation (RAG), reduces but does not eliminate the risk: an empirical study of leading commercial legal research tools found that they still produced incorrect or misleading answers in roughly one in six to one in three queries.³⁹

The French Senate report also identifies four risks common to all legal professions:⁴⁰

1. **Firstly**, artificial intelligence tools may not rely on up-to-date databases; some are based on models trained on data that is several months or years old and do not reflect current law or case law, which severely limits their usefulness.

³⁶ *Mata v. Avianca, Inc.*, No. 22-cv-1461 (PKC), 678 F. Supp. 3d 443 (S.D.N.Y. 2023), Opinion and Order on Sanctions of 22 June 2023.

³⁷ Conseil national des barreaux, *Guide pratique...*, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

³⁸ *R (Ayinde) v London Borough of Haringey; Al-Haroun v Qatar National Bank QPSC and another* [2025] EWHC 1383 (Admin), judgment of the Divisional Court of 6 June 2025.

³⁹ V. Magesh, F. Surani, M. Dahl, M. Suzgun, C. D. Manning, D. E. Ho, *Hallucination-Free? Assessing the Reliability of Leading AI Legal Research Tools*, "Journal of Empirical Legal Studies" 2025.

⁴⁰ Ch-A. Frassa, M.P de la Gontrie, *L'intelligence artificielle...*, *op. cit.*

2. **Secondly**, the use of generative artificial intelligence can reproduce errors due to: ‘design biases’, where the data used by the AI is itself based on cultural or discriminatory stereotypes, or ‘the user’s personal cognitive biases’, where the user formulates their queries based on their own prejudices or expectations, or fails to verify the result provided by the AI.⁴¹
3. **Thirdly**, there is the issue of the confidentiality of personal data that may be provided to the AI when a query is made and which may be reused by the artificial intelligence tool to train the model. The CCBE also highlights the importance of confidentiality, professional secrecy and independence when lawyers use generative AI systems in their daily practice.⁴²
4. **Finally**, there is the question of mastering the “prompt”, that is, the query submitted to the AI tool. Indeed, as AI is based on a probabilistic model, it does not seek to provide the most accurate or logical answer and, consequently, it may give different answers to the same question if it is phrased differently. According to the French Senate report, even when the same prompt was repeated word for word, the AI gave different answers within a few days, although the applicable law and case law had not changed.

More broadly, the European approach to AI regulation seeks to reconcile technological innovation with the protection of fundamental rights, democracy and the rule of law. Some authors even consider that the AI Act could produce a new ‘Brussels effect’, influencing AI regulation beyond the European Union itself.⁴³

IV. The Perspective of the European Bar: the FBE Experience

IV.1. The FBE Guidelines on generative AI

The European Bar began to address these questions before the adoption of the AI Act. As early as June 2023, the New Technologies Commission of the Fédération des Barreaux d'Europe (FBE), then chaired by Dr Maria Dymitruk, adopted the guidelines “European Lawyers in the Era of

⁴¹ Conseil national des barreaux, *Guide pratique...*, op. cit., p. 20.

⁴² CCBE *guide on the use of generative AI...*, op. cit., pp. 16–20.

⁴³ A. Bradford, *The Brussels Effect: How the European Union Rules the World*, Oxford University Press, 2020.

ChatGPT”,⁴⁴ which were among the first such documents addressed to lawyers in Europe. They are built around seven principles: **(1)** understanding generative AI technology; **(2)** recognising its limitations and the context of its use; **(3)** complying with existing rules on the use of AI; **(4)** integrating legal expertise; **(5)** preserving professional secrecy; **(6)** ensuring data protection and privacy; and **(7)** informing clients and taking responsibility for the result. Many of these principles are echoed in the CCBE guide of October 2025, which adds further points, such as the risk of AI “sycophancy” and the client’s opportunity to object to the use of generative AI in their matter.⁴⁵ Both documents convey the same message: generative AI leaves the core values of the profession (independence, professional secrecy, competence and loyalty to the client) unchanged, while altering the conditions in which those values must be upheld.

EUROPEAN LAWYERS IN THE ERA OF CHATGPT

GUIDELINES 2.0

ON HOW LAWYERS SHOULD
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE
OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY
LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS
AND GENERATIVE AI

The European Bars Federation
(Fédération des Barreaux d'Europe)
New Technologies Commission

IV.2. AI literacy and the role of bar associations

Under Article 4 of the AI Act, applicable since 2 February 2025, providers and deployers of AI systems must take measures to ensure a sufficient level of AI literacy of their staff; law firms using AI tools are deployers within the meaning of the Regulation. Although the 2026 Digital Omnibus reformulated this provision, placing greater emphasis on the Commission and the Member States in promoting AI literacy,⁴⁶ the professional duty of competence remains unchanged: a lawyer who uses an AI tool must understand it well enough to use it responsibly. National bars and European bar organisations are therefore well placed to support AI

⁴⁴ FBE New Technologies Commission, *European Lawyers in the Era of ChatGPT: Guidelines on how lawyers should take advantage of the opportunities offered by large language models and generative AI*, June 2023.

⁴⁵ CCBE *guide on the use of generative AI...*, *op. cit.*

⁴⁶ Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1689, as amended by Regulation (EU) 2026/1744.

literacy in the profession, through guidance and the exchange of good practice between jurisdictions.

IV.3. Involving practitioners in the design of AI-supported justice tools

The FBE also contributes the practitioners' perspective to EU-funded research projects under the Justice Programme, such as CREA3 (Conflict Resolution with Equitative Algorithms), IDEA (I-tools to Design and Enhance Access to justice) and DEUCE, devoted to the cross-border enforcement of judicial decisions in the digital age.⁴⁷ In these projects, the FBE collects information through its member bars, involves practising lawyers in testing and evaluating the tools and disseminates the results within the profession. This experience shows that AI-supported tools for justice should be designed together with legal practitioners and not only for their use. Lawyers are well placed to identify where a tool meant to “assist” in fact steers the outcome, where it may disadvantage the weaker



⁴⁷ CREA3: Conflict Resolution with Equitative Algorithms 3 (2024–2026) and IDEA: I-tools to Design and Enhance Access to justice (2024–2026), <https://dike.research.vub.be/en/projects>; DEUCE, see: <https://ideal.unina.it/deuce/about/>. Iza Konopacka acts as FBE Team Leader in the CREA3 and IDEA projects.

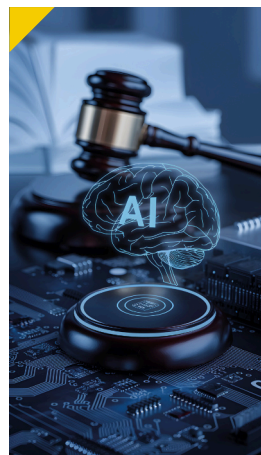
party, and where the explanations offered to users are insufficient for them to make informed choices. These are the very concerns addressed by the high-risk regime of the AI Act and by the CEPEJ principle “under user control”. Involving bars at the design stage therefore serves both the acceptance of new technologies by the profession and the protection of the fundamental rights of those who will use them.

V. Conclusions

In conclusion, artificial intelligence is progressively transforming legal systems, judicial practice and the daily work of legal professionals. The European Union has chosen to respond to these developments through a regulatory framework centred on risk prevention, transparency and the protection of fundamental rights. Through the AI Act, the European institutions are seeking not only to encourage innovation, but also to ensure that technological development remains compatible with European values and democratic principles.

At the same time, the growing use of generative artificial intelligence demonstrates both the opportunities and the limitations of these technologies. AI tools may considerably facilitate legal research, document analysis and access to information, but they also present important risks linked to hallucinations, bias, confidentiality and reliability. For this reason, artificial intelligence cannot currently replace legal reasoning, professional judgment or judicial discretion. Human supervision therefore remains essential, particularly in sensitive areas such as justice and legal practice.

More broadly, the European approach reflects the idea that artificial intelligence should remain a tool serving individuals and society rather than an autonomous system escaping human control. The real challenge for the coming years will not only concern technological progress itself, but also the capacity of legal systems, institutions and professionals to integrate these technologies responsibly while preserving public trust, fundamental rights and the rule of law. In this respect, the legal profession and its representative bodies should act as partners in the design, evaluation and responsible implementation of these tools, and not merely as their users. ◀



The FBE at the table, not in the audience: what DEUCE, IDEA and CREA3 bring to our Member Bars

Maria Dymitruk, President of the FBE New Technologies Commission

When justice is digitalised in Europe, the tools are usually designed by universities and IT teams, tested by courts, and only then handed to lawyers. The FBE has chosen a different position. In three ongoing projects financed by the European Commission under the Justice Programme, the FBE is not an observer or a guest speaker. It is a beneficiary and the partner responsible for making sure that the perspective of the legal profession is present while the AI tools are still being built.

The three projects are:

- ◆ **DEUCE** (Digitalising European Uncontested Claims Enforcement), coordinated by the Vrije Universiteit Brussel;
- ◆ **IDEA** (I-tools to Design and Enhance Access to justice), also coordinated by the VUB;
- ◆ **CREA3** (Conflict Resolution with Equitative Algorithms), coordinated by the Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II.

In each consortium the FBE sits alongside law faculties and technical universities from Belgium, Italy, Lithuania, Croatia, Slovenia, Estonia, Spain, Czechia and beyond, together with the Italian National Research Council, consumer associations such as Adiconsum and ZEV, and the European Bailiffs' Foundation. Within the consortia the FBE is described, correctly, as the partner bringing legal practitioners and a network of over 200 Member Bars representing more than a million lawyers. That network is the reason we are invited. It is also the reason this work belongs in the Bulletin.

DEUCE: making cross-border enforcement navigable

Anyone who has tried to enforce a European Enforcement Order or a European Order for Payment in another Member State knows the problem. The EU instruments are harmonised; the enforcement rules that follow them are not. DEUCE addressed exactly that gap.

The project produced a roadmap of the national enforcement rules of the EEO and EOP judgments across 26 Member States, a comparative and

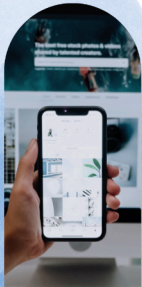
analytical study of best practices, an IT platform guiding users through those rules, and a blockchain component supporting the enforcement procedure. The FBE contributed to the data collection and analysis, and took on a specific dissemination duty written into the grant agreement: making the roadmap available to lawyers through our own channels. For our Member Bars, the most tangible moment came on 23 February 2026 the FBE ran an online webinar on cross-border enforcement, free of charge for lawyers from FBE Member Bars, including a live demonstration of the DEUCE IT platform, with Piotr Rodziejewicz of the University of Wrocław and Susanna Picariello of the DIKE research group at the VUB. That is the pattern we try to repeat in every project: a European research output translated, within weeks, into a practical session for practising lawyers.

Discover the DEUCE IT Platform

Improving the enforcement of judicial decisions in cross-border pecuniary claims across the EU

FBE members are invited to explore the DEUCE IT platform developed under the DEUCE project funded by the European Commission, where FBE is a partner.

We would greatly appreciate your feedback to help improve this practical tool supporting the European Order for Payment (EOP) procedure and the European Enforcement Order (EEO).



Info

- Access the Platform: <https://ideal.unina.it/deuce>
- Send your feedback to: fbe@fbe.org

Please share your observations on user experience, completeness and practical usefulness.

IDEA Project Webinar

Artificial Intelligence and Access to Justice

The FBE and the DIKE Research Group (VUB) invite you to a webinar on digitalisation and predictive justice in labour law, and on what the family law pilot CREA3 has already taught us.

Tuesday, 29 September 2026
6:00 PM CEST | Online

Our Speakers:

Izabela Konopacka
FBE Intellectual Property Law Commission

dr Gioia Arnone
Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Yordanka Bekirska
FBE Family Law Commission

dr Maria Dymitruk
FBE New Technologies Commission

Co-funded by the European Union under the Justice Programme

Join us online
Open link | No registration

IDEA: predictive justice meets labour law

IDEA asks what AI (namely predictive analytics and text mining) can responsibly do in labour law disputes, with redundancy dismissals as the principal case study. The consortium analyses the most digitalised court systems in Europe, designs a pilot digitalised court in three of the six participating Member States, and develops a digital journey, a solution explorer and a chatbot that helps a party choose between automated negotiation, online mediation and an ordinary settlement. The project is supported

by four Ministries of Justice, those of Belgium, Czechia, Estonia and Lithuania, along with courts, law firms and bar organisations.

The FBE leads the evaluation and dissemination side of the project and is involved in the design and testing phases. In plain terms: before a tool is offered to workers, employers or courts, lawyers from our Bars are asked whether it makes legal sense. The FBE prepared an **online webinar on IDEA on Tuesday 29 September 2026 at 18:00**, featuring Izabela Kono-packa of the FBE Intellectual Property Law Commission, Yordanka Bekirska of the FBE Family Law Commission and Dr Gioia Arnone of the DIKE research group. The **IDEA Final Conference will take place on 21 and 22 October 2026** at the Learning and Innovation Center of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, covering algorithmic management, predictive justice in labour disputes, human oversight, the AI Act and the Platform Work Directive.

CREA3: family justice, algorithms and the division of assets

CREA3 is the final stage of a line of projects that began with CREA and continued with CREA2, in which the FBE took part as a partner. It focuses on the digital handling of cross-border family law disputes, in particular the division of assets, through a user-friendly platform combining AI and text mining with communication tools, including videoconferencing designed for users with dyslexia or visual impairments. The project has produced, among other things, a legal assistant and an allocation engine now being tested in six jurisdictions.

Here the FBE works together with Adiconsum as the partner responsible for testing, validation and dissemination. The academic output is already public: the special issue “CREating Digital Justice: AI-Driven Innovation in Family Law, and Beyond” appeared in the “European



The poster for the Final Conference CREA3 Project, titled "Conflict Resolution with Equitative Algorithms", is dated 24-25 September 2026. It features a central graphic of a handshake with a gear and a scale of justice, labeled CREA3. The event is co-funded by the European Union. The poster lists partner universities including Federico II, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, and others. It also mentions the locations for the 24th and 25th of September 2026: Hotel Royal Continental, Naples (14:00-19:00) and Biblioteca storica della facoltà di Ingegneria - Federico II, Naples (09:00-13:00). The bottom section, "Promoted and supported by", lists various organizations like LEITAI, Consiglio Nazionale dei Notarati, and others.

Journal of Law and Technology” in October 2025 (<https://dike.research.vub.be/en/our-special-issue-is-now-online-creating-digital-justice-ai-driven-innovation-in-family-law-and>).

The **CREA3 Final Conference took place in Naples on 24 and 25 September 2026**, with four panels on trust and governance in AI-enabled justice, the design and testing of the CREA3 tools, AI-assisted decision-making in family property and inheritance matters, and human-centred safeguards such as contestability and human oversight. The tools themselves were demonstrated live.

What this actually gives a Member Bar

It is fair to ask what a Bar in Paris, Verona, Bilbao or Sofia gets out of a consortium meeting in Brussels. The first answer is influence exercised before the fact. Platforms that could eventually reach courts are shown to lawyers while they are still being designed, so feedback from our Bars has a chance of changing them at a stage when change is still cheap. That is a rare position for the profession, which is usually consulted once the architecture is fixed.

The second answer is more prosaic and just as useful. These projects produce outputs that cost a Member Bar nothing and can be passed on to members exactly as they are: the DEUCE roadmap of national enforcement rules in every official EU language mainly the tools developed in CREA3 and IDEA, not counting conference recordings and project publications. Each project also comes with at least one FBE event, free of charge for lawyers from Member Bars and built for practitioners rather than for researchers, which means the results arrive in our own calendar rather than in somebody else's.

Finally, participation gives the Federation a voice in European policy that rests on something more solid than opinion. The evidence gathered in these projects feeds directly into the debate on the digitalisation of judicial cooperation, the application of the AI Act and the use of AI in courts, and when the FBE speaks on those questions it now speaks with data it helped to collect.

Taken together, this is the difference between reading about the digitalisation of justice and having a hand in it. ◀





UPCOMING EVENTS

FBE Intermediate Meeting

Antalya, 15–17 October 2026

The FBE Intermediate Meeting 2026 will take place in Antalya, Türkiye, from 15 to 17 October 2026, hosted by the Union of Turkish Bar Associations (UTBA). The meeting will focus on two themes: the role of bars in raising awareness of the rule of law in civil society, and sustainability, greenwashing and the digital product passport.

Programme highlights

- ◆ **Thursday, 15 October (Akra Antalya Hotel):** meetings of the FBE Commissions, the Presidency meeting, the joint meeting of the Presidency and the Presidents of the Commissions, and the welcome reception.
- ◆ **Friday, 16 October (Akdeniz University Faculty of Law):** opening speeches by Prof. Dr. Necla Öztürk, Dean of the Faculty, Mr R. Erinç Sağkan, President of the UTBA, and Mr Rajko Marić, President of the FBE; the first panel, “The Role of Bars in Raising Awareness of the Rule of Law in Civil Society”, moderated by Ms Lucia Fabbri, Secretary General of the FBE; the second panel, “Sustainability, Green Washing, Digital Passport for Goods”, moderated by Mr Michele Calantropo, First Vice-President of the FBE; and the gala dinner.
- ◆ **Saturday, 17 October (Akdeniz University Faculty of Law):** the Forum des Bâtonniers with resolutions on the role of bar associations in protecting the rule of law, human rights and European values in times of geopolitical change, and on gender equality, diversity and

inclusion in governance and professional bodies; the signing of twinning agreements between bar associations and the General Assembly, including the presentation of the next Mediterranean Assises (Cairo, 17–19 April 2027) and of the General Congress 2027.

The full programme and registration are available at <https://www.fbeantalya2026.com>. Participants are kindly asked to bring their mobile phones and headphones, as the sessions will be supported by AI-based interpretation.

The FBE Presidency warmly invites the representatives of all FBE Member Bars to attend the Intermediate Meeting in Antalya and to contribute to the dialogue of the legal profession in Europe. ◀



FBE Young Lawyers Human Rights Oratory Competition

Cologne, 22–24 October 2026

The 7th edition of the FBE Young Lawyers Human Rights Oratory Competition will take place in Cologne, Germany, from 22 to 24 October 2026. The competition is organised by the FBE Human Rights Commission and hosted by the Cologne Bar Association, which will welcome all candidates at a reception on Thursday, 22 October.

Each FBE Member Bar may be represented by two candidates under the age of 35 with up to five years of professional experience; law students are also eligible. This year, the participants will address one of the most pressing questions for the rule of law and for lawyers themselves: “Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation (SLAPP) is a 21st Century

instrument of law. What does this mean for the future of the legal profession?”

In the first round, held on Friday, 23 October, each candidate will deliver a ten-minute speech on this subject before a panel of distinguished members of the FBE. The four best speakers will advance to the final round on the morning of Saturday, 24 October, after which the winners will be announced and trophies and certificates presented.

We wish all young participants every success and warmly invite colleagues to come to Cologne to support them.

More information: www.fbe.org. ◀

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN BARS

FBE YOUNG LAWYERS

HUMAN RIGHTS ORATORY COMPETITION

COLOGNE GERMANY

22 – 24 OCTOBER 2026

COMPETITION THEME

Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation (SLAPP) is a 21st Century instrument of law.

What does this mean for the future of the legal profession?

YOUNG VOICES. REAL IMPACT. DEFEND OUR RIGHTS. SPEAK. PERSUADE. INSPIRE CHANGE. SHAPE JUSTICE.

Seminar “AI for Fair Justice: Lessons from EU Projects on Cross-Border Employment and Family Disputes”

Murcia, 27 October 2026

On 27 October 2026, the Ilustre Colegio de la Abogacía de Murcia (ICAMUR) will host the seminar “AI for Fair Justice: Lessons from EU Projects on Cross-Border Employment and Family Disputes”, organised by the FBE jointly with the Commissions of the Murcia Bar.

The seminar will present the results of two research projects funded by the European Union under the Justice Programme, in which the FBE takes part as a partner representing practitioners. IDEA (I-tools to Design and Enhance Access to justice) examines the digitalisation of justice and the use of predictive algorithms in cross-border labour law disputes, while CREA III (Conflict Resolution with Equitative Algorithms) concerns predictive justice and digitalisation in cross-border family law disputes. Both

projects address questions at the intersection of private international law and new technologies: how AI-supported tools can help lawyers and parties in cross-border disputes, and which safeguards are needed to ensure that their use remains fair and respects fundamental rights.

The FBE warmly invites all members of the Member Bars, as well as everyone interested in the use of artificial intelligence in justice and in cross-border dispute resolution, to join us in Murcia.

More information: www.fbe.org and www.icamur.org. ◀



International LegalTech Competition 2026: Grand Final

Verona, 19 November 2026

The preliminary round of the International LegalTech Competition 2026, organised by the FBE New Technologies Commission in co-operation with the FBE Intellectual Property Commission, has now been completed. This year's edition, "The Art of Legal Prompting", focuses on a skill that is rapidly becoming essential for the legal profession: the ability to combine legal expertise with the effective, ethical and responsible use of generative AI tools in legal practice.

Following the assessment of the submissions by the jury, fourteen participants from seven countries have qualified for the Grand Final:

- ◆ **Matteo Carloni**, Ordine degli Avvocati di Lucca,
- ◆ **Guadalupe Castro**, Ordine degli Avvocati di Lucca,
- ◆ **Arno Debelle**, Ordre français des avocats du barreau de Bruxelles,
- ◆ **Lara del Olmo**, Ilustre Colegio de la Abogacía de Madrid (ICAM),



- ◆ **María Dorado Paredes**, Ilustre Colegio de la Abogacía de Madrid (ICAM),
- ◆ **Selin Gül**, Ankara Bar Association,
- ◆ **Daniel Kula**, Okręgowa Izba Radców Prawnych we Wrocławiu,
- ◆ **María Lertxundi Vaquero**, Ilustre Colegio de la Abogacía de Bizkaia,
- ◆ **Vitantonio Leuzzi**, Ordine degli Avvocati di Trento,
- ◆ **Alexis Miró**, Ilustre Colegio de la Abogacía de Madrid (ICAM),
- ◆ **Anna Popowicz-Pazdej**, Okręgowa Izba Radców Prawnych we Wrocławiu,
- ◆ **Lilian Schmidtsdorff**, Rechtsanwaltskammer Nürnberg,
- ◆ **Mikołaj Wiza**, Okręgowa Izba Radców Prawnych w Poznaniu,
- ◆ **Zhivko Zhelyazkov**, Sofia Bar Association.

The Grand Final will take place on 19 November 2026 in Verona, Italy, hosted by the Verona Bar Association. We congratulate all finalists and look forward to welcoming them in Verona.

We would also like to thank everyone who took part in the competition, the members of the jury who assessed the entries in the preliminary round, and all FBE Member Bars and Law Societies that supported their candidates. ◀



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