Initial training of judges and prosecutors in the European Union

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Judges

General description

The Cyprus Judicial Training School, officially established in 2020 (Law 101(I)/2020), is responsible for providing training to the Cypriot Judiciary, which currently amounts to 130 Judges. As a School, our main focus is on continuous training which comprises of EU related topics as well as Judgecraft skills and training on national legislation.

Unlike other non-common law Schools in Europe, that provide training to trainee Judges before appointment, Cyprus differs in that Judges do not undergo training prior to judicial appointment. Moreover, given the size of the country and the very small intake of Judges annually, it is not always feasible to organise initial training activities for a very small number of Judges. In this regard, initial training is not offered on an annual or very frequent basis. Usually new Judges are appointed after promotions and retirements of other Judges, therefore there may be only 1-2 appointments per year. 2020 and 2021 were an exception where 12-15 new Judges were appointed in each year. Therefore, since 2020 we were able to organise initial training.

Once Judges are appointed, they undergo an induction course by shadowing superior Judges. Following the induction course, initial training is provided, where possible, to newly appointed Judges irrespective of jurisdiction. (See section "Format and content of the initial training" below for the details). This is done within the first 1-2 years of judicial appointment. No differentiation is made with regards to the type of Judges as the initial training comprises of a Judgecraft Programme. The training, when offered, is compulsory and we aim for participation of at least 15 Judges.

Lastly, in Cyprus, as a country that follows the common law system, Prosecutors are not considered part of the Judiciary and therefore the School is not responsible for their training. However, the School coordinates their participation in EJTN training seminars.

Access to the initial training

As mentioned above, initial training of Judges in Cyprus takes place after judicial appointment. In this regard, there are no access conditions or a recruitment procedure for participation in initial training for Judges.

Format and content of the initial training

Newly appointed Judges undergo an induction course for a period of 10-15 days before taking on their official duties on the bench. During this period, they are under the direct supervision of a Supreme Court Judge. The Supreme Court Judge will assign the newly appointed Judge to a Court President who will be responsible for the induction course programme, for answering any questions that will arise during this induction period and guide them on daily matters arising in court procedures. During the induction period, newly appointed Judges shadow Judges in Court, visit Court Registries and meet with other Judges.

Since 2020, given the bigger intake of Judges, we offer Judgecraft as part of the initial training of Judges. This course comprises training on Judicial Ethics and Conduct, Judicial Resilience, Unconscious Bias and delivering ex tempore judgements. Judges are trained by the School's certified trainers who use a mix of teaching skills such as presentations, videos, group exercises, case studies and plenary discussions.

Newly appointed Judges are also selected to participate in ERA, EJTN and other trainings abroad shortly after their appointment.

Termination of the initial training and qualification process

Cyprus does not follow this model for Judges. The School is not involved, in any manner, in the recruitment process of Judges. As mentioned above, initial training takes place after judicial appointment, thus it is not a step in the recruitment process. There are no final exams or further recruitment process to become a Judge. The School issues a certificate of participation which is filed in the Supreme Court's archives and Judges personal development files.

Prosecutors

This content has not been provided.

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