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European Law Institute

The European Law Institute is an independent non-profit organisation, established to contribute to better law-making in Europe, the enhancement of European legal integration and the formation of a more vigorous European legal community.

Background information

The European Law Institute was founded as an international non-profit association on 1 June 2011. Sir Francis Jacobs was elected as the first President of the ELI. Since 2017, Christiane Wendehorst is the new President of the European Law Institute. The Institute's [Secretariat](#) is located in Vienna, Austria, and is hosted by the University of Vienna.

Key objectives

Building on the wealth of diverse legal traditions and cooperation among jurists from different vocational backgrounds, inspired by the activities of the [American Law Institute](#), the ELI evaluates and stimulates the development of the law, legal policy and practice in a global context. It conducts and facilitates pan-European research and provides a forum for discussion and cooperation of jurists – academics, judges, lawyers and other legal practitioners, representing a broad range of legal traditions.

To accomplish its tasks, ELI operates on its own initiative. It is also, however, available for consultation by institutions involved in the development of law on a European, international or national level.

Members

The Institute brings together not only scholars, but also practitioners and judges from the whole of Europe.

There are two categories of Members: Fellows, who participate in the Institute's activities on the basis of their own personal and professional convictions, and non-voting Observers, who may be either individuals or legal entities (Institutional Observers), such as European institutions, national authorities or professional legal organizations. Amongst its Observers the Institute counts the European Parliament, UNIDROIT, UNCITRAL and numerous supreme courts.

It is open to Members and external experts to propose projects on which the Institute should work, to comment on projects as they develop and to take part in the ELI General Assembly, an annual event convening many legal professionals from all over Europe and beyond.

Projects

[ELI projects](#) cover all branches of the law: substantive and procedural; private and public. Any project carried out under the auspices of the ELI must be at the service of the European citizen, responding to a manifest practical need and aiming at results that potentially have immediate practical impact. In order to be endorsed, ELI's projects need to be approved by a broad constituency of jurists who work independently and without regard to the interests of particular stakeholders or constraints of a political nature.

The project activities lead to publications which are usable directly (for example, as draft rules or model contracts) by legislative bodies, judiciaries or other interested parties. The ELI's publications mainly seek to improve knowledge and practice in the respective field of law and at the same time raise awareness among members of the legal community of the most pressing issues in law. Although its work is mostly addressed at the European legislator and the judiciary, the main beneficiaries of ELI's work are ultimately the general public, legal and natural persons of Europe, who will benefit from improved and more coherent laws.

ELI publications are freely downloadable [here](#).

Related links

[European Law Institute \(ELI\)](#)

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