



Find a forensic expert

Information on finding a forensic expert in EU countries

Forensic examinations - what are they?

Examinations of an object or situation requiring expertise in a particular specialised field, conducted by a **forensic expert** (also known as a forensic scientist or forensic science expert). Types and titles may differ from country to country.

Commonest types:

- fingerprint examination
- DNA examination
- document examination
- handwriting examination
- digital forensics
- forensic medicine
- forensic psychiatry
- ballistics
- forensic toxicology
- soil examination
- examination of paint & glass
- road accident analysis.

Forensic experts do *not* interpret the law or examine how it is applied. In most EU countries they are either employed by a state forensic science institution or operate privately.

Duties & responsibilities

National law lays down forensic experts' duties and responsibilities and establishes their right to perform forensic examinations. Most countries stipulate requirements (education, training and/or certification) for recognition as a forensic expert and for conducting forensic examinations in a particular field.

The results of a forensic examination are detailed in a **forensic expert report** (also known as an **expert opinion**). In this document, the forensic expert uses the results of a scientific study or physical examination of an object or situation to provide reasoned answers to the questions asked by the person in charge of proceedings (e.g. the investigator or prosecutor), or the court.

Forensic examinations may be conducted in the context of criminal, administrative or civil proceedings, either as part of a pre-trial investigation (usually at the request of an investigator or prosecutor) or during the court investigation (at the court's request).

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- [🇦🇹 Austria](#)
- **Czech Republic:** There is no database of forensic experts – the experts usually work within the police.
- **France:** A national register of forensic experts does not exist. The French Supreme Courts (Cour de Cassation) publishes [🇫🇷](#) lists of experts (comprised of all judicial experts, not only forensic experts) registered in each appeal court.
- [🇳🇱 Netherlands](#)

- **Northern Ireland:** There is no official national register of forensic experts. The experts work in the [Forensic Science Northern Ireland \(FSNI\)](#) and their competence is maintained by the agency as part of the Quality Accreditation.
- **Romania:** There is currently no Romanian electronic register of forensic experts. However, the Ministry of Justice has started a project to create a register. In the meantime the [Ministry of Justice](#) has a PDF list available [here](#).
- [Slovenia](#): There is a register of all court expert witnesses, which includes national forensic experts as well.
- **Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania** have a joint Register of Forensic Science Experts - available free of charge in English through:
 - [The Latvian interface](#)
 - [The Estonian interface](#)
 - [The Lithuanian interface](#)
 - For further information, see [here](#).

Information for other EU countries will follow shortly.

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