Resolution on judicial training

2012/2575(RSP) - 14/03/2012 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted, a resolution tabled by the Committee on Legal Affairs and the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs on judicial training. It notes that a **comparative study on judicial training** in the Member States commissioned by Parliament took stock of the activities carried out in this field by national schools for the judiciary, including the type of training offered, relevant conditions, and budgetary resources, with a view also to identifying needs and suggestions for improvement and best practices, and contains the results of an in-depth survey of over 6 000 judges and prosecutors in Member States focusing on their experience of EU law training and their suggestions for improvement. While acknowledging that direct contacts are the best option, Members believe that in view of the budgetary constraints, as well as the responses given by judges in the study, training and **advice could also be provided via the Internet** (video-conferencing, on-line courses, web streaming) as well as by means of exchanges. They note that judges call for further assessment and adaptation of training programmes to their needs, while they seem to prefer interactive training where they can exchange experiences and discuss case studies rather than ‘classic’ (top-down) training formulae.

Recalling that the supply of training is currently far from meeting the Commission's target, namely that it should be available to half of EU legal professionals, Parliament makes the **following recommendations on training**:

- a further aim would be to coordinate the training provided by existing judicial training schools and facilitate and promote dialogue and professional contacts;

- multilingual training is important, as the study shows that only a relatively small number of judges speak a foreign language well enough to be able to participate actively in judicial training in other Member States;

- one way of resolving the problems of language training and cost-effectiveness is to utilise modern technology and finance the creation of applications (‘apps’) on the lines of Apple's ITunes U;

With regard to the **pilot project on judicial training** proposed by Parliament in 2011, Members make the following points:

- the pilot project, presented by Luigi Berlinguer and Erminia Mazzoni and scheduled to be run in 2012, should aim first of all to identify and expand best practices in organising access to EU law and relevant training within the national judicial systems and training schools;

- the EU should encourage Member States to emulate successful institutions, such as EU law coordinators of the kind that exist in Italy and the Netherlands within the national court structure, and promote the training of such coordinators and otherwise facilitate their work at EU level;

- the pilot project should encompass the creation of a working group comprising national and European judicial training providers as well as extra-judicial actors, whose aim would be to identify a series of thematic ‘clusters’ of EU law issues, which seem to be the most relevant for everyday judicial practice, both on ‘practical’ matters (how to submit a request for preliminary ruling, how to access EU law databases, etc.), and on matters of substance;

- the pilot project could coordinate (a) the exchange of advice and knowledge about individual legal systems among the individual judicial training schools, building upon the existing networks and resources and (b) formal training and familiarisation with foreign legal systems;

Lastly, Parliament feels that a **common judicial culture** also needs to be created among members of the judiciary using the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and the work of the Council of Europe's Venice Commission to promote the core values of the judicial profession. It proposes that **the Commission hold an annual forum** at which judges of all levels of seniority in areas of law where domestic and cross-border issues frequently arise can hold discussions on a recent area or areas of legal controversy or difficulty, in order to encourage discussion, build contacts, create channels of communication and build mutual confidence and understanding.