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Proposal for a

REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

**establishing the Justice programme for the period 2028-2034 and repealing Regulation
(EU) 2021/693**

{SWD(2025) 550-551} - {SEC(2025) 547}

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. CONTEXT OF THE PROPOSAL

This proposal provides for a date of application as of 1 January 2028 and is presented for a Union of 25 Member States. For Ireland and Denmark, the provisions of Protocols No 21 and No 22 annexed to the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) apply, as illustrated in the section on variable geometry on page 8.

• Reasons and objectives

Article 3 of TEU states that ‘*The Union shall offer its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice*’. Justice is closely linked to Union values, as enshrined in Article 2 TEU. These core values imply the need for independent judiciaries operating within efficient and high-quality justice systems capable of safeguarding fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed by Union law, in particular by ensuring access to justice for suspects, accused persons, requested persons in European arrest warrant (EAW) proceedings and victims of crime. Judicial independence itself stems from the common constitutional traditions shared by all Member States, the rule of law mentioned in Article 2 TEU, the Member States’ obligation to provide remedies sufficient to ensure effective legal protection in the fields covered by Union law under Article 19 TEU, and from the fundamental right to an effective remedy before a tribunal, as enshrined in Article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (‘the Charter’). In addition to being in line with Union values, a well-functioning Union area of justice with effective, efficient and resilient national justice systems is necessary for a flourishing internal market and is also a precondition for economic growth and competitiveness.

In the past years, the EU has combined several instruments to build a Union area of justice based on mutual trust. Several legislative and policy initiatives¹ have been adopted and supported, also thanks to dedicated EU funding.

Since its launch in 2014, the Justice programme has actively supported the creation of an area of freedom, security and justice, by fostering judicial cooperation based on mutual recognition and enforcement of judicial decisions. The Programme has also promoted Member States’ adherence to the rule of law and fundamental rights and supported the proper functioning of independent judicial systems. This has led to tangible progress across the EU as, for instance, national justice systems have become more effective, with legal practitioners now better informed and equipped to apply the relevant EU *acquis*, e.g. on the use of cross-border judicial cooperation procedures and mechanisms. At the same time, the practical protection and promotion of the rights of children and other vulnerable groups (such as persons with disabilities) involved in judicial proceedings continues to improve.

Significant progress has been made², but achieving an effective, efficient, accessible, resilient and digitalised Union area of justice, based on the rule of law, remains an ongoing challenge.

¹ These include the European judicial training strategy, the EU strategy on victims’ rights, the Council’s European e-justice strategy, the EU strategy on the rights of the child, and the forthcoming Commission strategy on digitalisation of justice that aims to promote digital transformation within justice systems. Moreover, to further uphold the rule of law, the European Commission established the rule of law mechanism, including the annual rule of law report, which evaluates developments in judicial independence, anti-corruption frameworks and access to justice in Member States. The Commission’s anti-corruption package, adopted in 2023, introduced comprehensive measures to combat corruption, enhance transparency and safeguard judicial integrity throughout the Union. The EU has also adopted an [internal security strategy](#) and a [counter-terrorism agenda](#).

² For instance, insights from the [EU Justice Scoreboard 2024](#) and data collected via recent [Eurobarometer surveys](#) highlighted progress in Member States’ efforts to deliver effective national justice systems, but these insights also suggest that there is a continued need

This calls for continued coordinated action by the EU and its Member States. In the Political Guidelines for the European Commission 2024-2029, President von der Leyen emphasised that the respect for the rule of law should remain ‘*a must for EU funds*’³. This underscores the critical role EU funding plays in addressing persistent challenges.

In fact, despite the EU commitment, the protection and promotion of fundamental rights is an ongoing challenge⁴. These rights –such as the right to an effective remedy and to a fair trial, as well as the protection of whistleblowers and their right to freedom of expression, associated procedural safeguards for suspects and accused persons as well as requested persons in EAW proceedings, and victims’ rights – are central to justice and the rule of law. Their effective implementation is essential to build trust in the justice system and ensure that everyone, including the most vulnerable, can effectively exercise their rights in the EU as an area of justice. However, as the 2021 annual report on the application of the Charter also shows, fragmented application of Union law and legal protection gaps⁵ reflect ongoing challenges in this area⁶.

In addition, progress on digitalisation across the EU is uneven. The EU’s growth and competitiveness increasingly rely on digitalisation, including in the justice sector. Digital tools and artificial intelligence (AI) can help public administrations, including courts, deliver faster, more accessible and cost-effective services. At the same time, the use of qualified trust services, such as electronic signatures and seals, brings benefits in terms of convenience and legal certainty in the context of cross-border transactions and is becoming increasingly relevant for transparent and trustable justice systems. The upcoming rollout of the EU Digital Identity framework and the forthcoming European Business Wallets are also expected to further facilitate digitalisation and build trust. Efficient and transparent justice systems enhance legal certainty, attract investment and strengthen cross-border cooperation in civil and criminal matters. Digitalisation reduces burdens on justice professionals, improves access to judicial files and allows citizens and businesses to engage with courts remotely. This increases transparency, saves costs and supports economic productivity. Moreover, digital justice systems are more resilient during crises, ensuring continuity and reinforcing public trust.

The rapidly changing economic, social and geopolitical environment creates uncertainties and challenges, including Russia’s full-scale war against Ukraine. Among the challenges which affect, more specifically, the Union area of justice, are the increasing threats to the rule of law, several forms of serious crime and obstacles to access to justice and judicial cooperation. Respect for the rule of law is a key determinant of a predictable business environment that drives investment and innovation, and an essential consideration for companies operating across borders. Respect for the rule of law ensures the proper functioning and resilience of the internal market, of the cooperation in the justice area based on mutual trust and recognition

for improvement. Possible improvements include: (i) the need to reduce the burden of court fees; (ii) the availability of legal aid; (iii) the promotion of voluntary use of alternative dispute resolution methods (ADRs); (iv) support for the participation of persons with disabilities as professionals in the justice system; and (v) facilitating access to justice by electronic means, because the uptake of digitalisation in national justice systems across EU Member States remains uneven. In addition, cross-border crimes have continued to rise since 2020, suggesting cross-border judicial cooperation will only become more important.

³ [Political guidelines European Commission 2024-2029](#).

⁴ Special Eurobarometer 487b. Also Special Eurobarometer 552: just over six in ten respondents (62%, 3 p.p. since 2021) indicate being aware of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, including a quarter of all respondents (25%) who have heard of it and know what it is. Close to four in ten (37%) of all respondents have heard of the Charter, but do not really know what it is.

⁵ [435ae4e8-f5f4-432b-a391-b05468474a1e_en \(europa.eu\)](#).

⁶ [Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: ‘Protecting Fundamental Rights in the Digital Age - 2021 Annual Report on the Application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights’](#).

and is an essential precondition for compliance with the principles of sound financial management of the Union budget. Respect for the rule of law is necessary for the effective, uniform and transparent application of Union law and for equal access to justice. Facilitating cooperation in relation to forms of serious crime, such as corruption, terrorism and environmental crime is essential to maintain the rule of law and trust in those who govern public institutions.

Other challenges include persistent obstacles to judicial cooperation and access to justice. Effective access to justice, including through digital means, is a prerequisite for economic growth. If there is no effective access to justice, both citizens and business development, especially that of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), are affected. Weak justice systems, characterised by inefficiency or high costs, deter business activities, thereby hindering economic growth⁷. One of the main obstacles is the fact that communication in cross-border judicial proceedings is very often still paper-based, which leads to unnecessary delays and costs. One of the reasons is the different speeds of digitalisation of national justice systems and the absence of sufficient interoperability between Member States' national IT systems, and similarly, between national systems and EU Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) agencies and bodies. Besides this aspect, delays and inefficiencies in cross-border judicial cooperation procedures remain evident. Access to justice – i.e. the ability of everyone to seek and obtain a just resolution of legal problems through a range of legal and justice services, in a manner that complies with fundamental rights, including access to reliable legal information and effective enjoyment of procedural safeguards – is still problematic, above all in cross-border contexts. This affects individuals, such as victims and persons suspected or accused of crime, and businesses. Moreover, the existing tools for collecting comparative information about the quality, independence and efficiency of Member States' justice systems are still insufficient. All these factors can undermine Member States' trust in each other's justice systems and may therefore hinder the proper functioning of the EU area of freedom, security and justice.

Lastly, the level of knowledge, skills and awareness of the EU *acquis* and EU digital tools among practitioners in the justice field is often insufficient. Despite the progress made⁸, the level of participation in training still differs considerably between Member States and among justice professions. This has a negative impact on the development of a common European judicial culture, since well-trained practitioners play a key role in ensuring that the EU *acquis* is implemented correctly and consistently across the EU. Justice professionals also lack the necessary digital skills and are not well equipped to use digital tools and infrastructure. Training on Union law is also particularly important in view of the following factors: (i) the deterioration of the rule of law and attacks on fundamental rights in some Member States; (ii) the need to prevent and combat forms of serious crime, including corruption; (iii) the increasing relevance of digitalisation; and (iv) the fact that there are more and more individuals exercising their right to live and work in another Member State⁹.

The consequences of not addressing these challenges will have serious repercussions, as most of these issues have a marked transnational dimension and cannot be adequately addressed by Member States acting alone. Building an effective Union area of justice has profound

⁷ Stakeholder_contribution_on_rule_of_law_-_oecd.pdf (europa.eu); [9789264303416-2-en.pdf \(oecd-ilibrary.org\)](#).

⁸ As highlighted by the annual reports on European judicial training published by the Commission's Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, since the implementation of the two consecutive European judicial training strategies ([Commission's 2020 Communication Ensuring justice in the EU – a European judicial training strategy for 2021-2024](#) and [2011 Communication, Building trust in EU-wide justice – a new dimension to judicial training](#)), over 2 million EU justice professionals have participated in judicial training on Union law.

⁹ European Commission Communication, Ensuring justice in the EU – a European judicial training strategy for 2021-2024. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0713>.

implications for the political, social and economic life of the EU. It also has tangible benefits for people's day-to-day lives and business operations. The 2028-2034 Justice programme will support the further development of a Union area of justice based on the Union's values, the rule of law, mutual recognition and trust, as well as effective, inclusive, accessible and resilient justice systems, which are a precondition for economic growth and competitiveness. The new Programme will also facilitate access to justice, promote judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters and promote judicial training with a stronger emphasis on the digitalisation of justice. The policy areas covered by this legal proposal are firmly anchored in the EU Treaties, which provide the legal bases for EU action through financial intervention. The Justice programme will continue to sustain open, democratic, pluralist and more equal and inclusive societies under the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2028-2034).

- **Consistency with existing policy provisions**

In recent years, the Justice programme has supported several legislative and policy initiatives and has directly contributed to delivering on several of the Commission's priorities¹⁰. The priorities listed below are and will become even more relevant for the Justice programme:

1. *'Protecting our democracy, upholding our values'*. The Justice programme will support judicial cooperation and access to justice by reinforcing the rule of law and fundamental rights as democratic foundation of the EU. The Programme's new enhanced focus on digitalisation will make judicial systems more efficient, by enabling faster access to legal protection. This new focus directly complements efforts to safeguard democracy and fundamental rights, and increase legal certainty, investment protection, procedural fairness and public trust in democratic institutions. The 2028-2034 Justice programme will support judicial independence and increase the capacity to enforce laws, including relevant rules to protect democracy. It will enable cross-border judicial cooperation to combat cross-border digital crimes and support the implementation of digital tools that align with broader digital enforcement policies like the Digital Services Act¹¹, the AI Act¹² and the European Accessibility Act¹³. It will contribute to the application of the Charter by supporting training of legal professionals on fundamental rights. To this end, synergies will be fostered in particular with the AgoraEU programme¹⁴.

2. *'Supporting people, strengthening our societies and our social model'*. The Justice programme will contribute to uphold fundamental rights, for instance by promoting judicial training on non-discrimination and on the application of the Charter and create links with social cohesion policies by supporting consistent legal protection across Member States. The Programme will also support the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights¹⁵ by ensuring enforceability through more accessible justice mechanisms. Moreover, digitalised justice systems, set up with due attention to security vulnerabilities and the needs of all

¹⁰ [Political guidelines European Commission 2024-2029](#).

¹¹ Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market For Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC (Digital Services Act), *OJ L 277*, 27.10.2022, pp. 1–102, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/2065/oj>.

¹² Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence and amending Regulations (EC) No 300/2008, (EU) No 167/2013, (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2018/1139 and (EU) 2019/2144 and Directives 2014/90/EU, (EU) 2016/797 and (EU) 2020/1828 (Artificial Intelligence Act), *OJ L*, 2024/1689, 12.7.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj>.

¹³ Directive (EU) 2019/882 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on the accessibility requirements for products and services, *OJ L 151*, 7.6.2019, pp. 70–115, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/882/oj>.

¹⁴ Proposal for a Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the 'AgoraEU' programme for the period 2028-2034, and repealing Regulations (EU) 2021/692 and (EU) 2021/818, COM(2025) 550 final.

¹⁵ https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies-and-activities/european-pillar-social-rights-building-fairer-and-more-inclusive-european-union_en.

affected persons, have the potential to improve access to justice, including by reducing barriers, especially for children and other vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, Roma and other marginalised communities. In this regard, synergies will be fostered with the Erasmus+ programme¹⁶ and the National and Regional Partnership Plans¹⁷ including, in particular in the framework of the European Social Fund¹⁸. By improving accessibility and affordability (e.g. videoconferencing, e-filing), digital justice can better inform interested parties, serve the needs of many individuals and businesses, and reduce inequalities in accessing rights and services, by strengthening social and intergenerational fairness and making legal processes more efficient and inclusive.

3. *‘Delivering together and preparing our Union for the future’*. The Justice programme will contribute to a more integrated and effective Union, including by creating and connecting digital infrastructure across Member States. Its increased focus on digitalisation will reduce administrative burdens for Member States, bring savings for citizens and businesses, improve cross-border cooperation and support mutual recognition and enforcement of judgments. At the same time, the Programme will support the goal of simplifying EU mechanisms by promoting more interoperability among national justice systems. In this regard, synergies will be fostered with the National and Regional Partnership Plans to ensure progress on the digitalisation of national justice systems at both national and EU level.

- **Consistency with other Union policies**

1. *“A New Plan for Europe’s Sustainable Prosperity and Competitiveness”*. The digitalisation of justice contributes to growth and competitiveness by creating more efficient justice systems, with simplified legal procedures and reduced time and costs for cross-border litigation across the EU. This is particularly important for SMEs and start-ups. In this regard, synergies will be fostered with the National and Regional Partnership Plans in key areas such as skills, capacity-building and digitalisation. The Programme will complement also the plan to deepen the Single Market (especially in services and digital sectors and on financial services) by promoting legal interoperability and smoother enforcement of EU rules. By financing activities on consumer and investors policy, company law and contract law and anti-money laundering, the 2028-2034 Single Market and Customs programme will complement the Justice programme and contribute directly to the implementation of EU policy in the field of justice and the creation of a Union area of justice. Moreover, by reinforcing the rule of law and legal certainty, the Justice programme will strengthen the investment environment, reinforce the actions underpinning the Savings and Investments Union¹⁹ and support the European Competitiveness Fund²⁰ by creating a stable legal framework for business activity. Lastly, there will also be synergies in the field of research and innovation, specifically concerning the need to deepen the understanding of the use of advanced new technologies, such as AI, in the justice sector and, therefore, synergies will be

¹⁶ Proposal for a Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Erasmus+ programme for the period 2028-2034, and repealing Regulations (EU) 2021/817 and (EU) 2021/888, COM/2025/549 final.

¹⁷ Proposal for a Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security for the period 2028-2034 and amending Regulation (EU) 2023/955 and Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, COM/2025/565 final.

¹⁸ Proposal for a Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Social Fund as part of the National and Regional Partnership Plan set out in Regulation (EU) [...] [NRP Plan] establishing conditions for the implementation of the Union support to quality employment, skills and social inclusion for the period from 2028 to 2034, COM/2025/558 final.

¹⁹ https://finance.ec.europa.eu/regulation-and-supervision/savings-and-investments-union_en.

²⁰ Proposal for a Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF), including the specific programme for defence research and innovation activities, repealing Regulations (EU) 2021/522, (EU) 2021/694, (EU) 2021/697, (EU) 2021/783, repealing provisions of Regulations (EU) 2021/696, (EU) 2023/588, and amending Regulation (EU) [EDIP], COM/2025/555 final.

fostered with the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (Horizon Europe)²¹.

2. *“A New Era for European Defence and Security”*: The Justice programme facilitates cross-border judicial cooperation, which is crucial for security and to combat organised crime, terrorism, and cyber threats. The Programme also supports the enforcement of the European Arrest Warrant (EAW) and provides digital infrastructure for lawful access to electronic evidence and case management across borders. Moreover, the Justice programme supports anti-corruption measures at EU level. This complements the call for reflection on extending the competence of the European Public Prosecutor’s Office (EPPO) to handle serious cross-border crimes, especially corruption, that impacts Union funds and cannot be handled alone by Member States. In addition, the political guidelines for the European Commission 2024-2029²² include the ambition to bolster Europol’s capacity to support national law enforcement agencies and its cooperation with other EU agencies and bodies. This ambition is closely aligned with the Programme’s increased focus on digitalisation, enabling faster transmission of evidence, real-time coordination and an enhanced use of secure AI/data analytics in legal enforcement within the limits of the applicable legal frameworks. It also aligns with the establishment of the Authority for Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AMLA), which will help prevent the Union’s financial system from being used of money laundering and terrorist financing. Likewise, the reform of Eurojust will help EU-level coordination of cross-border investigations and prosecutions to become more effective, including thanks to new digital tools. Additionally, the digitalisation of justice will also provide technical resilience, secure infrastructure for legal systems, and frameworks for prosecuting cybercrime, thereby complementing the Preparedness Union²³ and cyber-defence strategies²⁴ as well as the ‘ProtectEU – a European Internal Security Strategy’²⁵. Given the intrinsic connections between security and justice on the ground, there will be synergies with EU funds covering asylum, migration and integration, border management and internal security, for instance to provide adequate training to the judiciary, also in relation to the new rules introduced by the Pact on Migration and Asylum, and ensure effective protection to victims of crime, interoperability with the European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS) and inter-agency cooperation in the fields of justice and internal security, including via justice-related agencies and bodies such as Eurojust and the EPPO.

3. *“A Global Europe: Leveraging Our Power and Partnerships”*: The Programme’s focus on the rule of law, judicial cooperation and access to justice will mirror how they are promoted at global level, including through the implementation of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)²⁶. In this respect, synergies will be developed with Global Europe²⁷, as the Justice programme will contribute to the EU’s external action by strengthening judicial systems in accession countries in the context of the enlargement process.

²¹ Proposal for a Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing Horizon Europe, the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, for the period 2028-2034 laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulation (EU) 2021/695, COM/2025/543 final.

²² [Political guidelines European Commission 2024-2029](#).

²³ https://commission.europa.eu/topics/preparedness_en.

²⁴ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/cybersecurity-strategy>.

²⁵ https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/commission-presents-protecteu-internal-security-strategy-2025-04-01_en.

²⁶ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

²⁷ Proposal for a Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing Global Europe, COM/2025/551 final.

2. LEGAL BASIS, SUBSIDIARITY AND PROPORTIONALITY

• Legal basis

This proposal is based on Article 81(1) and (2) and Article 82(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

Article 81(1) TFEU provides that the Union shall develop judicial cooperation in civil matters having cross-border implications.

Article 81(2) TFEU provides for the adoption of measures aimed at ensuring the mutual recognition and enforcement of judgments; the cross-border service of judicial and extrajudicial documents; effective access to justice and support for the training of the judiciary and judicial staff. Article 82(1) TFEU provides for measures to promote judicial cooperation in criminal matters.

The combination of these Articles allows for a comprehensive approach to support the development of judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, especially cross-cutting issues affecting both fields.

• Variable geometry

This Regulation is based on legal bases under Title V of Part Three TFEU, concerning the area of freedom, security and justice. As a consequence, the application of the Regulation to Denmark and Ireland is subject to the provisions laid down in Protocol No 21 and Protocol No 22 annexed to the TEU and the TFEU.

In accordance with Articles 1 and 2 of Protocol No 22, Denmark does not take part in the adoption by the Council of measures proposed pursuant to Title V of Part Three TFEU, and such measures are not binding upon or applicable in Denmark.

In accordance with Articles 1 and 2 of Protocol No 21, Ireland does not take part in the adoption by the Council of measures proposed pursuant to Title V of Part Three TFEU, and such measures are not binding on or applicable in Ireland. However, Ireland may choose to take part in the adoption and application of any such proposed measure. In addition, any time after the adoption of such a measure, Ireland may accept the measure, subject to the completion of procedures referred to in Article 4 of Protocol No 21.

• Subsidiarity (for non-exclusive competence)

The objectives outlined under the section “reasons and objectives” have a strong transnational dimension and require joint solutions, as well as EU-level governance, coordination and support. Isolated national actions would be less effective and impactful than coordinated EU-level efforts, which foster cooperation, capacity building, mutual learning, and the sharing of resources, expertise and best practice.

Without EU action and funding, the functioning of a Union area of justice would be at risk, negatively affecting many beneficiaries, especially members of the judiciary, civil society organisations (CSOs) working on access to justice, and EU-wide legal networks. EU support helps overcome national barriers, enabling each Member State to act on issues it could not address alone. This ensures no Member State is left behind in tackling cross-border problems.

EU-level action is also key for addressing EU-wide priorities that may not rank highly on national agendas or where targeted support is needed. In some areas, national efforts alone may be insufficient, short-term or misaligned with EU priorities. For example, the EU should continue to support cross-border training on Union law and exchanges for judicial professionals. This is not only a Treaty-based obligation, but also essential for meeting shared

transnational challenges, equipping justice professionals with the right skills and reinforcing core Union values.

The EU is uniquely positioned to create cross-border opportunities for justice professionals to connect, develop and contribute to a shared legal culture. It should therefore continue to promote transnational cooperation, awareness raising and networking. Such activities build mutual trust among national justice systems and help gather comparative data on their quality, independence and efficiency – something individual Member States cannot achieve alone.

EU action is equally crucial in areas needing close coordination with Member States to uphold international justice standards, such as the UN SDGs, and to maintain a unified EU stance on key issues like fundamental rights in the digital sphere and data protection.

Lastly, EU action is essential for advancing justice reforms in candidate countries as part of the enlargement process, particularly in the areas of the rule of law, independence of the judiciary and anti-corruption. These efforts are vital for safeguarding EU justice standards, completing the Single Market and strengthening EU cohesion and prosperity.

In addition to the need for EU action in this field, EU funds have also a strong added value because the EU is best placed to ensure that justice systems across the Union can operate in a harmonised manner. EU intervention has intrinsic added value for EU judicial training since delegating this responsibility at national level would lead to a more inconsistent understanding and implementation of Union law across Member States. This will have negative effects on the overall capacity of national actors to implement EU policies and laws, address cross-border issues and on the development of transnational multi-country projects. Moreover, EU action on justice policies helps boost the Single Market and improves competitiveness. A comprehensive and harmonised justice framework across Member States reduces legal uncertainties and inconsistencies, thereby facilitating smoother cross-border business operations and investments. Predictable enforcement of regulations, consistent protection of intellectual property rights, and effective dispute resolution mechanisms are crucial for maintaining investor confidence and encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation. By providing clear legal standards and ensuring their uniform application, the EU helps companies operate efficiently, reduces transaction costs and enhances the overall attractiveness of the Single Market. This legal predictability also bolsters fair competition by ensuring that businesses face equal conditions irrespective of their country of origin within the EU, thus promoting economic stability and sustainable growth.

- **Proportionality**

The proposal does not go beyond the minimum required in order to achieve the stated objective at Union level.

- **Choice of the instrument**

The new 2028-2034 Justice programme builds primarily on the 2021-2027 Justice programme. The most appropriate instrument to operationalise the proposed framework is a regulation.

3. RESULTS OF RETROSPECTIVE EVALUATIONS, STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- **Retrospective evaluations/fitness checks of existing legislation**

The mid-term evaluation of the 2021-2027 Justice programme highlights that the actions funded by the Programme are coherent with policies and priorities at EU and national levels, aligned with other EU funding instruments and consistent with international commitments and

objectives, such as the SDGs²⁸. The streamlined architecture of the 2021-2027 Programme allows for greater impact and a more focused approach in key areas compared to the previous Programme 2014-2020. Specifically, the 2021-2027 Justice programme is successfully contributing to supporting the mutual recognition and enforcement of judicial decisions across Member States and to improving cross-border cooperation, by creating a long-term impact through the further development of a cohesive Union area of justice built on mutual trust and cooperation.

Direct funding to beneficiaries has led to immediate and tangible benefits for the target groups involved. In particular, funding for EU networks such as the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN) facilitates sustained collaboration, capacity building, and continuous high-quality engagement among legal professionals across the EU. Furthermore, the Programme's continued emphasis on judicial training significantly contributes to unify and develop the EU legal landscape. The Justice programme plays a crucial role in fostering a shared legal culture by training thousands of judges, lawyers and court staff and by supporting the implementation of the 2021-2024 strategy on European judicial training²⁹. By facilitating exchanges of best practice, the Programme strengthens Member States' collaboration, ensuring that judicial practitioners apply Union law in a uniform, coherent and consistent way across borders, thus enhancing the integrity of EU legislation.

The 2021-2027 Programme builds on the progress achieved in the previous programming period (2014-2020), by further reducing barriers to justice and improving frameworks and protections for marginalised individuals³⁰. At the same time, its mid-term evaluation points to some areas for improvement. First of all, evidence gathered through stakeholder consultations highlights the need to expand the Programme's reach. Even if it has already reached a large number of people, awareness of the Programme remains limited among certain types of stakeholders³¹ and also varies between Member States. This suggests that while the Programme's communication activities are effective, they may not be reaching all sectors and Member States equally³². Moreover, some stakeholders suggested including correctional services and prison staff in the Programme's target groups. In order to better reflect the Programme's impact and enhance its added value and visibility, further actions could be considered, e.g. a more systemised process for collecting stakeholders' perceptions and experiences, and ways to link the existing platforms (such as the EJTN and the e-Justice portal) with successful projects on the EU Funding & Tenders portal. In addition, to keep increasing the Programme's cost-effectiveness, collaboration with existing EU-level networks could be further explored.

All these findings are taken into account for the 2028-2034 Justice programme presented in this proposal.

In terms of addressing new challenges, the digitalisation of justice has become a significant cross-cutting objective of the 2021-2027 Justice programme, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated the use of digital technologies. This focus facilitates easier access to legal information, modernises cross-border judicial cooperation mechanisms and supports broader EU digital transformation goals, making justice systems more efficient

²⁸ Mid-term evaluation of the 2021-2027 Justice programme, COM(2025)267 and SWD(2025)134.

²⁹ For instance, in 2022, 24 088 justice professionals took part in training supported by the Justice programme (around 35.3% of all those who received EU (co-)funded training on Union law that year). See [Justice programme performance statement](#).

³⁰ Mid-term evaluation of the 2021-2027 Justice programme, COM(2025)267 and SWD(2025)134.

³¹ Higher education and public authorities reported higher awareness of the Programme compared to CSOs.

³² Mid-term evaluation of the 2021-2027 Justice programme, COM(2025) 267 and SWD(2025)134.

and accessible. Investment in digitalisation also strengthens fundamental rights within the justice field, such as the presumption of innocence³³. Moreover, the increased use of digital tools expands the Programme's reach efficiently. There is still scope to further capitalise on opportunities brought about by digitalisation in the justice field. This is why the 2028-2034 Justice programme will have an increased focus on digitalisation under its general and specific objectives. This will ensure a more strategic and consistent approach to all the issues and challenges related to the digitalisation of justice.

- **Stakeholder consultations**

The consultation strategy supporting the preparatory work for the Programme included: (i) a first open public consultation (OPC) for the final evaluation of the 2014-2020 Justice programme 2024-2020 and the mid-term evaluation of the 2021-2027 Justice programme 2021-2027; (ii) a second OPC in the domains of cross-border education, youth, culture, media, values and civil society; and (iii) ad hoc consultations that the Commission organised in the form of interviews and targeted surveys with stakeholders.

The first OPC aimed to strengthen the evidence base for the evaluation of the two Justice programmes by gathering the views of relevant stakeholders on the Programmes' effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added value. It was launched on 3 April 2024 and was open for 12 weeks (closing on 26 June 2024).

Overall, respondents to this OPC considered the Justice programmes' general and specific objectives to be highly relevant. Among the specific objectives, judicial training and access to justice were considered the most relevant. Moreover, most respondents considered the activities funded by the Justice programmes to be relevant, in particular those related to developing and maintaining information and communication technology³⁴, with digitalisation perceived as an important dimension of the Programme. Respondents considered both programmes effective in achieving their objectives and intended results, specifically concerning: (i) improving access for all citizens to CSO services, counselling activities and support activities (assessed as achieved to a very or high extent by 62% of respondents); (ii) supporting training activities for stakeholders (assessed as achieved to a very high or high extent by 50% of respondents); and (iii) increasing the cross-border interoperability of systems (assessed as achieved to a very or high extent by 50% of respondents). In that regard, respondents highlighted the development of E-CODEX and ECRIS, as well as the training in the use of IT tools, as particularly relevant and effective. In terms of coherence, most respondents were not able to compare the Justice programme with other programmes (only three out of eight respondents indicated that they were familiar with other similar EU initiatives and/or national initiatives in the field of justice). Two respondents considered the Justice programmes to be complementary to other EU programmes or initiatives to a great extent, and one to a limited extent. There was consensus among respondents on the EU added value of both programmes, with all respondents considering that the EU was best placed to fund the type of activities under the Justice programme, as EU involvement ensured that all Member States adhered to the same standards, resulting in more equal access to justice. As a result, most respondents considered that, if the 2021-2027 Justice programme were to stop, Member States would not be able to achieve similar results at national, regional or local level and technical cooperation would become limited to smaller-scale bilateral projects between neighbouring Member States, while some organisations would not be able to secure funding

³³ Ibidem.

³⁴ Considered highly relevant by 62% of respondents.

at all. A summary report of the OPC is available on the European Commission's "Have your say platform"³⁵.

The second OPC, which informed the impact assessment for EU programmes in the domains of cross-border education, youth, culture, media, values and civil society under the 2028-2034 MFF, was carried out between 12 February and 7 May 2025³⁶. The EU programmes covered by this OPC were: Creative Europe, Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps, the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme and the Justice programme. The purpose of this OPC was to help assess the public perception of the relevance and EU added value of the EU programmes and to identify barriers to their specific impact and potential improvements to the Programmes' architecture. The public consultation received 4 861 responses from 110 countries, encompassing all EU Member States as well as non-EU countries³⁷. Most of these responses came from respondents with experience of Erasmus + and the European Solidarity Corps; only 60 respondents declared to have experience with the Justice programme. 51% of responses were submitted by EU citizens. Within this group, around 1 200 respondents were under the age of 30. 49% of responses were submitted by organisations and institutions. These included 17% responses from academic and research bodies, the majority of which were large institutions, with 69% employing more than 250 people. Another 11% of submissions came from non-governmental organisations (NGOs), several of which were umbrella CSO networks. Public authorities accounted for 232 submissions, including a mix of international, national, regional and local entities. A further 208 responses came from companies and businesses. A small number of additional responses (around 45) were received from trade unions, business associations, consumer groups and environmental organisations.

Some of the main results relevant for the justice field are detailed here below:

- According to the respondents, *"uphold and promote the rule of law"* is an important (22.51%) and very important (58.71%) policy priority and an area where EU funding provide added value to a large extent compared to funding at national, local or regional level (50.44%);
- According to the respondents, *"the effective protection of EU funds against fraud, corruption and other illegal activity"* is an important (25.78%) and very important (55.09%) policy priority and an area where EU funding provide added value to a large extent compared to funding at national, local or regional level (54.68%);
- According to the respondents, *"build an EU area of justice, promote judicial training, judicial cooperation and access to justice"* is an important (29.77%) and very important (37.03%) policy priority and an area where EU funding provide added value to a large extent compared to funding at national, local or regional level (47.85%);
- At the same time, the respondents consider that the following actions, which are particularly relevant under the Justice programme, bring to a large extent a positive impact in the future: *"Supporting cross-border mutual learning, exchange of good practices and cooperation, coalition building"* (72.19%), *"Supporting the creation and development of EU-level networks and organisations"* (60.48%), *"Capacity building and training/train-the-trainer activities"* (56.10%), *"Cross-border mutual learning possibilities in the justice area"* (49.08%).

³⁵ [Justice programme - final evaluation of the 2014-2020 programme and interim evaluation of the 2021-2027 programme.](#)

³⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14523-EUs-next-long-term-budget-MFF-EU-funding-for-cross-border-education-training-and-solidarity-young-people-media-culture-and-creative-sectors-values-and-civil-society_en.

³⁷ The country of residence with the most contributions overall was Germany, followed by France and Italy.

- **External expertise**

The proposal has been informed by external and internal reports and assessments, e.g. programme evaluations (mid-term and ex post), the spending review exercise, reports and documents from other EU institutions, agencies and international organisations ³⁸.

- **Impact assessment**

The impact assessment on cross-border education, youth, culture, media, values and civil society analysed the future of five funding programmes in this cluster, including the Justice programme.

The two options below were discarded at an early stage:

– **A discontinuation of the EU funding:** this option was immediately discarded given the importance of the problems affecting the policy areas in this cluster, the prominence given to these policies in the Political Guidelines for the European Commission 2024-2029³⁹ and the added value of the EU interventions, underpinned by the respective mid-term evaluations.

– **Merging the Justice programme with other programmes in this cluster:** this option was also discarded at an early stage for legal reasons. The Justice programme cannot be merged with other programmes in this cluster, as not all 27 EU Member States participate in the Justice programme (contrary to the other existing programmes in the cluster). The legal bases of the Regulation establishing the 2021-2027 Justice programme are Article 81(1) and (2) and Article 82 (1) TFEU. These provisions are part of Title V TFEU, which covers the area of freedom, security and justice. By virtue of the Protocols annexed to the Treaties, Denmark does not take part in decisions made under Title V in line with Protocol No 22 (known as ‘opt-out’) and Ireland can choose to take part in certain measures if it decides to ‘opt-in’, in line with Protocol No 21. The other programmes in the scope of the impact assessment are open to all Member States and are therefore incompatible with the legal bases of Title V.

Retained options: The Commission decided to have a stand-alone Justice programme, because both the final evaluation of the 2014-2020 Justice programme and the interim evaluation of the 2021-2027 Justice programme confirmed that the Programme provided unique added value that would be difficult to replicate at national level. This decision is reflected in the post-2027 MFF proposal package presented by the Commission on 16 July 2025.

In line with the Better Regulation Guidelines, the impact assessment report was submitted for quality scrutiny to the Regulatory Scrutiny Board (RSB). The RSB gave an opinion on the impact assessment on 13 June 2025. The RSB made a series of comments and recommendations on the following: scope, problem definition and the use of evaluations, intervention logic and objectives, comparison of options and cost-benefit analysis, governance, coherence, and future monitoring and evaluation. The impact assessment accompanying this legal proposal was reviewed in accordance with the RSB’s comments and recommendations.

- **Simplification**

³⁸ Including for instance: [Stakeholder contribution on rule of law - oecd.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#); https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/wmidm_jud_natcrt_wmid_natcrt_supcrt/datatable; http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/cooperation/cepej/evaluation/default_en.asp.

³⁹ [Political guidelines European Commission 2024-2029](#).

The initiative will be in line with the Communication on the road to the 2028-2034 MFF⁴⁰ and its aim to streamline EU management, governance and implementation of EU programmes to improve efficiency for applicants, beneficiaries and EU institutions. Efforts will be made to simplify the application, management and reporting requirements and to provide additional guidance. Pooling of resources, including in areas such as monitoring and internal and external communication will bring economies of scale and enhance the predictability of EU funding more widely among beneficiaries, stakeholders and EU citizens.

As regards the management mode of the Programme, there is no clear scope for further simplification as the management modes used for the 2021-2027 Justice programme are appropriate for a programme of this size (i.e. direct management and a limited number of initiatives implemented under indirect management by the bodies referred to in point (c) of the first subparagraph of Article 62(1) of Regulation (EU) 2024/2509). During the last years, the Programme has implemented several simplification measures to streamline its processes and administrative procedures, thereby enhancing its efficiency. There is limited evidence to suggest that major changes are still needed, especially considering the simplification measures implemented thus far. For instance, to simplify implementation and reduce administrative burden for beneficiaries, the use of simplified forms of funding will remain the standard form of contribution for reimbursing grants.

Beneficiaries consider the instruments used for the 2021-2027 Justice programme (grants and procurement activities) suitable for the needs of the Programme.

At the same time, several findings show that the growing demand for the digitalisation of justice is highlighting significant investment gaps at both EU and national levels.

A two-level approach (i.e. at EU level and at Member-State level) is therefore necessary to allow the full digitalisation of national justice systems and to build an effective and interconnected Union area of justice.

This would not only create more links with all the policy areas covered under the Justice programme but will also provide for strong coherence with actions carried out at national level for the digitalisation of national justice systems under the National and Regional Partnership plans.

- **Fundamental rights**

The Programme objectives are closely linked to the promotion of fundamental rights and are in line with the Charter.

In the implementation of all of its actions, the Programme also seeks to promote the Union values set out in Article 2 TEU, gender equality, the rights of the child, including by means of child-friendly justice, the protection of victims' rights and the effective application of the principle of equal rights and non-discrimination based on any of the grounds listed in Article 21 of the Charter, in accordance with and within the limits set by Article 51 of the Charter.

In addition, projects funded under the Programme must comply with the highest ethical standards, the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679⁴¹ and international law

⁴⁰ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TEXT/?uri=celex:52025DC0046>.

⁴¹ Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation), *OJ L 119*, 4.5.2016, pp. 1–88, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/679/oj>.

agreements to which the Union or all EU Member States are party (including the United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities⁴²).

4. BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

The financial envelope for the implementation of the Justice programme for the period 1 January 2028 to 31 December 2034 will be EUR 798 million (current prices).

5. OTHER ELEMENTS

- **Implementation plans and monitoring, evaluation and reporting arrangements**

This initiative will be monitored through the performance framework for the 2028-2034 budget established under Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council [Performance Regulation]⁴³. The performance framework also sets out the rules for evaluations, which shall be conducted in accordance with the Commission's Better Regulation Guidelines and will be based on indicators relevant to the objectives of the Programme.

The Programme is implemented through direct management by the Commission. A limited number of initiatives might also be implemented under indirect management by international organisations.

- **Detailed explanation of the specific provisions of the proposal**

The general objective of the proposed 2028-2034 Justice programme (Article 3 of the Regulation) is to contribute to the further development of an efficient, inclusive, resilient and digitalised Union area of justice, based on the rule of law, mutual recognition and mutual trust. By achieving this objective, the Programme will also strengthen democracy and the protection of fundamental rights and contribute to growth and competitiveness. This general objective will be achieved through three specific objectives:

- (a) To facilitate and support judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, and to promote the rule of law;
- (b) To promote and support judicial training;
- (c) To facilitate and support effective and non-discriminatory access to justice for all and effective remedy, including by digital means.

The Programme will provide for synergies between its different specific objectives to effectively support the policy areas these objectives cover and increase their potential to reach its target groups. To be effective, the Programme should take into account the specific nature of the different policies, their different target groups and their particular needs through tailor-made approaches.

In implementing this Regulation, the Commission will set the funding priorities in the respective policy areas each year. The structure of the Regulation allows for flexibility and for quick adjustments based on policy needs and new policy and technological developments.

⁴² OJ L 23, 27.1.2010, p. 37, ELI: [http://data.europa.eu/eli/convention/2010/48\(1\)/oj](http://data.europa.eu/eli/convention/2010/48(1)/oj). Since the Union became a Party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, its provisions have become an integral part of the Union legal order and are binding upon the institutions of the Union and on its Member States including its Article 13 on access to justice. That Article requires that States Parties ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others (including through the provision of procedural and age-appropriate accommodations) in all legal proceedings, including at investigative and other preliminary stages. It also indicates that States Parties shall promote appropriate training for those working in the field of administration of justice, including police and prison staff.

⁴³ Proposal for a Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a budget expenditure tracking and performance framework and other horizontal rules for the Union programmes and activities, COM/2025/545 final.

Proposal for a

REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

establishing the Justice programme for the period 2028-2034 and repealing Regulation (EU) 2021/693

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 81(1) and (2) and Article 82(1) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee¹,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions²,

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure,

Whereas:

- (1) Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) provides that the Union is to offer its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice and Article 67 of the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) further specifies that the Union is to constitute an area of freedom, security and justice with respect for fundamental rights and the different legal systems and traditions of the Member States. Justice is closely linked to core values on which the Union is founded, particularly the rule of law, democracy and respect for fundamental rights as enshrined in Article 2 TEU. Those core values imply the necessity of independent judiciaries operating within efficient justice systems. Judicial independence itself stems from the common constitutional traditions shared by all Member States, the rule of law, and from the principle of effective judicial protection provided for in Article 19(1) TEU and Article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (the ‘Charter’).
- (2) The completion of an area of freedom, security and justice is still challenged by factors such as threats to the rule of law, several forms of serious crime and obstacles to access to justice and judicial cooperation. It is therefore more important than ever to promote, strengthen, and defend justice, which has direct implications for the political, economic, financial and social life in the Union and beyond and is necessary to prepare for an enlarged Union. Building on the 2021-2027 Justice programme established by Regulation (EU) 2021/693 of the European Parliament and of the Council³, this Regulation aims at establishing the Justice programme (the ‘Programme’) in order to support the further development of a Union area of justice based on the rule of law, fundamental rights, democracy, the independence and

¹ OJ C, [...], [...], ELI: [...].

² OJ C, [...], [...], ELI: [...].

³ Regulation (EU) 2021/693 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing the Justice Programme and repealing Regulation (EU) 1382/2013 (OJ L 156, 5.5.2021, p. 21, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/693/oj>).

impartiality of the judiciary, mutual recognition and mutual trust, access to justice and cross-border judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters. The Programme should also provide an enhanced focus on digitalisation of justice across all its specific objectives.

- (3) This Regulation lays down an indicative financial envelope for the Justice programme. For the purpose of this Regulation, current prices are calculated by applying a fixed 2% deflator.
- (4) In a rapidly changing economic, social and geopolitical environment, which creates uncertainties and challenges, recent experience has shown the need for a more flexible multiannual financial framework and Union spending programmes. To that effect, and in line with the objectives of the Justice programme, the funding should duly consider the evolving policy needs and Union's priorities as identified in relevant documents published by the Commission, in Council conclusions and European Parliament resolutions, while ensuring sufficient predictability for the budget implementation.
- (5) Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁴ applies to the Programme. It lays down the rules on the establishment and the implementation of the general budget of the Union, including the rules on grants, prizes, non-financial donations, procurement, financial assistance, financial instruments and budgetary guarantees.
- (6) In accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁵, Council Regulation (EC Euratom) No 2988/95⁶, Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96⁷ and Council Regulation (EU) 2017/1939⁸, the financial interests of the Union are to be protected through proportionate measures, including the prevention, detection, correction and investigation of irregularities and fraud, the recovery of funds lost, wrongly paid or incorrectly used and, where appropriate, the imposition of administrative sanctions. In particular, in accordance with Regulations (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 and (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) may carry out investigations, including on-the-spot checks and inspections, with a view to establishing whether there has been fraud, corruption or any other illegal activity affecting the financial interests of the Union. In accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/1939, the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) may investigate and prosecute fraud and other illegal activities affecting the financial interests of the Union as provided for in Directive (EU) 2017/1371 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁹. In accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, any person or entity receiving Union funds is to fully cooperate in the protection of the Union's

⁴ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>).

⁵ Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 September 2013 concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1073/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (Euratom) No 1074/1999 (OJ L 248, 18.9.2013, p. 1., ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/883/oj>).

⁶ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 of 18 December 1995 on the protection of the European Communities financial interests (OJ L 312, 23.12.95, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/1995/2988/oj>).

⁷ Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 of 11 November 1996 concerning on-the-spot checks and inspections carried out by the Commission in order to protect the European Communities' financial interests against fraud and other irregularities (OJ L 292.15.11.96, p. 2, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/1996/2185/oj>).

⁸ Council Regulation (EU) 2017/1939 of 12 October 2017 implementing enhanced cooperation on the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office ('the EPPO') (OJ L 283, 31.10.2017, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/1939/oj>).

⁹ Directive (EU) 2017/1371 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2017 on the fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law (OJ L 198, 28.7.2017, p. 29, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2017/1371/oj>).

financial interests, to grant the necessary rights and access to the Commission, OLAF, EPPO and the European Court of Auditors and to ensure that any third parties involved in the implementation of Union funds grant equivalent rights.

- (7) The Programme is to be implemented in accordance with Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council [Performance Regulation]¹⁰ which establishes the rules for the expenditure tracking and the performance framework for the budget, including rules for ensuring a uniform application of the principles of ‘do no significant harm’ and gender equality referred to in Article 33(2), points (d) and (f), of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 respectively, rules for monitoring and reporting on the performance of Union programmes and activities, rules for establishing a Union funding portal, rules for the evaluation of the programmes, as well as other horizontal provisions applicable to all Union programmes such as those on information, communication and visibility.
- (8) Measures under the Programme should support enhanced mutual recognition and enforcement of judgments and judicial decisions in civil and criminal matters, mutual trust between Member States and the necessary approximation of legislation in order to facilitate cooperation between all the relevant authorities, including by digital means. The Programme should also support the maintenance and setting up of existing and new IT tools or platforms for new judicial cooperation instruments. While harvesting the efficiency gains of digitalisation of justice, the protection of fundamental rights, in accordance with the Charter, as well as safeguards against inequalities, discrimination and exclusion should be ensured.
- (9) The Programme should, in all its activities, promote the rule of law also by supporting efforts to improve the independence, quality and efficiency of national justice systems in order to enhance mutual trust, which is indispensable for judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters.
- (10) In civil matters, the Programme should support the protection of individual rights in civil and commercial cases, including Anti-SLAPP (strategic lawsuits against public participation), and promote greater convergence in civil law. This will help eliminate obstacles to satisfactory and efficiently functioning judicial and extrajudicial procedures for the benefit of all parties in a dispute. To support the effective enforcement and practical application of Union law in this area, the Programme should also support the functioning of the European Judicial Network in civil and commercial matters established by Council Decision 2001/470/EC¹¹.
- (11) In criminal matters, the Programme should help implement rules and procedures to ensure the recognition of judgments and decisions throughout the Union and support the protection of the Union financial interests. It should contribute to removing obstacles to effective mutual trust and cooperation, including through support for measures that ensure the correct transposition of Union legal acts approximating national criminal laws. The Programme should also support actions aimed at facilitating cooperation in relation to forms of serious crime such as corruption, terrorism and environmental crime. In particular, the Programme should enhance coordination and cooperation between law enforcement, judicial authorities and other

¹⁰ Proposal for a Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a budget expenditure tracking and performance framework and other horizontal rules for the Union programmes and activities (OJ L ..., ..., ELI: ...).

¹¹ Council Decision 2001/470/EC of 28 May 2001 establishing a European Judicial Network in civil and commercial matters (OJ L 174, 27.6.2001, p. 25, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2001/470/oj>).

competent authorities. Furthermore, it should support cooperation with and awareness raising of the role of Union bodies and agencies, such as the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust) and the EPPO, thereby enabling a more integrated system of judicial cooperation in the Union.

- (12) The Programme should contribute to improving non-discriminatory access to justice for all and should support activities to protect the rights of victims of crime as well as the procedural rights of suspects and accused persons in criminal proceedings as well as requested persons in European Arrest Warrant (EAW) proceedings. Access to justice should include, in particular, access to courts, alternative methods of dispute resolution, and legal advice to be provided in an independent and impartial manner by public office-holders. Particular attention should be given to improved implementation of the various Union legal acts for the protection of victims of crime, as well as to actions aimed at the exchange of best practices between competent authorities, including judicial authorities, law enforcement authorities, legal practitioners and at supporting the improvement of the knowledge and use of collective redress instruments. Moreover, support should be given to activities which facilitate effective and equal access to justice for persons who face discrimination or are in a situation of vulnerability (such as persons with disabilities in accordance with Article 13 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities¹², children, minorities, LGBTIQ+ persons and victims of gender-based violence, domestic violence and other forms of interpersonal violence. The Programme should also support activities of civil society organisations which contribute to those objectives.
- (13) The Programme should support the training of the judiciary and judicial staff. Training activities should contribute to the implementation of Union strategic priorities, including for instance, training on civil and criminal law, on the effective application of the Charter, on mutual recognition as well as on procedural safeguards (including safeguards for strategic lawsuits against public participation (anti-SLAPP)). Training activities under the Programme should have a strong focus on digitalisation of justice, providing a supportive environment for the judiciary and judicial staff, including through increasing digital skills, knowledge and awareness. Training should also support the digitalisation of cross-border judicial proceedings. Support to training should happen in synergy with measures at national level, thus leveraging the impact of the Programme.
- (14) The Programme should support the annual work programme of the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN), which is an essential actor with regard to judicial training and plays an important role in supporting and implementing the objectives of European judicial training policy. The EJTN is the only network at Union level bringing together the judicial training bodies of the Member States. It is therefore in a unique position to organise exchanges and training for the judiciary between Member States and to coordinate the work of national judicial training bodies, thereby fostering synergies between Union supported and nationally funded training and structured communication between the Union and national training providers. Moreover, the EJTN may also include the judicial training bodies of candidate countries and potential candidates as observer members.
- (15) The protection of children's rights is a core objective of the Union, as enshrined in Article 3(3) of the TEU and Article 24 of the Charter. In all actions concerning

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OJ L 23, 27.01.2010, p. 37, ELI: [http://data.europa.eu/eli/convention/2010/48\(1\)/oj](http://data.europa.eu/eli/convention/2010/48(1)/oj).

children, the best interests of the child are to be a primary consideration. That is essential also for the legitimacy and effectiveness of justice systems. Children involved in legal proceedings, whether as witnesses, victims, suspects, accused or convicted persons, or other parties, often face significant barriers which undermine their ability to participate effectively and to benefit from appropriate safeguards. Strengthening the capacity of national justice systems and practitioners to address the specific needs of children is therefore necessary to ensure the effective exercise of their rights.

- (16) The Programme should contribute to digitalisation of justice, including by developing, rolling-out and maintaining tools at Union level. It could thus leverage tools facilitating digital communication between courts and parties such as the European Electronic Access Point, allowing easier access to judicial data such as the European Case Law Identifier, or enhancing the efficiency and security of digitalised judicial procedures such as trust services under Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 and the European Digital Identity Wallets. A well-functioning Union area of justice with effective and resilient national justice systems is necessary for a flourishing internal market and it is a precondition for economic growth, sound financial markets and competitiveness. Digitalisation enhances the efficiency of cross-border judicial procedures in civil and criminal matters as well as access to justice within the Union, which in turn are a driver for investments. Digitalisation of justice also enables and facilitates the effective and efficient cooperation with other competent authorities in the implementation and enforcement of key pieces of the EU digital rulebook, such as for instance the Digital Services Act. Digitalising justice systems helps also to reduce costs for both public budgets and end users, while maintaining effective services for citizens and businesses. It enables justice professionals to focus on core tasks, improving the quality and efficiency of proceedings. Digital tools also expand access to justice, by allowing remote communication and easy access to judicial files, thereby enhancing transparency. Moreover, digitalisation strengthens the resilience of national justice systems in times of crisis (such as pandemics), ensuring they can continue to operate effectively for the benefit of citizens and businesses. That strengthens trust in the justice system's ability to function reliably under unexpected circumstances.
- (17) The Union must protect its security interest against suppliers which could represent a persistent security risk due to the potential interference from third countries as well as their security, notably cybersecurity. It is therefore necessary to reduce the risk of persisting dependency on high-risk suppliers in the internal market, including in the ICT supply chain, as they could have potentially serious negative impacts on security for users and companies across the Union and the Union's critical infrastructure in terms of the integrity of data and services as well as the availability of service. This restriction should be based on a proportionate risk assessment and associated mitigation measures as defined in the Union policies and laws.
- (18) The Commission should ensure overall consistency, complementarity and synergies with the work of Union bodies, offices and agencies, in particular Eurojust, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the European Union Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (eu-LISA) and the EPPO, and should take into account the work of other national and international actors in the areas covered by the Programme.
- (19) In order to ensure the efficient allocation of funds from the general budget of the Union, it is necessary to ensure that all actions carried out under the Programme have Union added value, complement Member States' actions and are consistent with other

Union actions. Consistency, complementarity and synergies should be sought in particular with funding programmes supporting policy areas that are closely interlinked, such as the National and Regional Partnership Plans (established by Regulation XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council [NRP Regulation]¹³), the AgoraEU programme (established by Regulation XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council [AgoraEU]¹⁴), and external actions supported by Global Europe (established by Regulation XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council¹⁵).

- (20) The Programme replaces the programme established by Regulation (EU) 2021/693 for the programming period 2021-2027 which should therefore be repealed.
- (21) In accordance with Articles 1 and 2 of Protocol No 22 on the position of Denmark, annexed to the TEU and to the TFEU, Denmark is not taking part in the adoption of this Regulation and is not bound by it or subject to its application.
- (22) In accordance with Article 3 of Protocol No 21 on the position of the United Kingdom and Ireland in respect of the area of freedom, security and justice, annexed to the TEU and the TFEU, Ireland has notified [*by letter of ...*,] its wish to take part in the adoption and application of this Regulation.

or

In accordance with Articles 1 and 2 of Protocol No 21 on the position of the United Kingdom and Ireland in respect of the area of freedom, security and justice, annexed to the TEU and to the TFEU, and without prejudice to Article 4 of that Protocol, Ireland is not taking part in the adoption of this Regulation and is not bound by it or subject to its application,

HAVE ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

Subject matter

This Regulation establishes the Justice programme (the ‘Programme’) and lays down the objectives of the Programme, its budget for the period 2028-2034, the forms of Union funding and the rules for providing such funding.

Article 2

Definition

For the purposes of this Regulation, ‘judiciary and judicial staff’ means judges, prosecutors and members of staff of courts and of prosecutors’ offices, as well as any other justice professionals associated with the justice systems or otherwise participating in the administration of justice, irrespective of the definition in national law, legal status or internal organisation, such as lawyers, notaries, bailiffs or enforcement officers, insolvency practitioners, mediators, court interpreters and translators, court experts, prison staff and probation officers.

¹³ Proposal for a Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security for the period 2028-2034 and amending Regulation (EU) 2023/955 and Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, COM(2025) 565 final.

¹⁴ Proposal for a Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the ‘AgoraEU’ programme for the period 2028-2034, and repealing Regulations (EU) 2021/692 and (EU) 2021/818, COM(2025) 550 final.

¹⁵ Proposal for a Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing Global Europe, COM/2025/551 final.

Article 3

Programme objectives

1. The general objective of the Programme is to contribute to the further development of an efficient, inclusive, resilient and digitalised Union area of justice, based on the rule of law, mutual recognition and mutual trust, thereby also strengthening democracy and the protection of fundamental rights, and contributing to the Union's growth and competitiveness, as well as the digitalisation of justice at the Union level.
2. The Programme has the following specific objectives:
 - (a) to facilitate and support judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, and to promote the rule of law, in particular the independence, quality and efficiency of justice systems, including through improving the effective cross-border recognition and enforcement of judicial decisions;
 - (b) to promote and support training of the judiciary and judicial staff, with a view to: promoting the rule of law, fundamental rights and democracy; fostering a common legal and judicial culture; ensuring the consistent and effective implementation of the relevant Union legal instruments; and providing a supportive environment for the digitalisation of judicial cooperation and justice systems.
 - (c) to facilitate and support effective and non-discriminatory access to justice for all and effective remedy, including by digital means, by promoting efficient civil and criminal procedures and by promoting and supporting the rights of all victims of crime and the procedural rights of suspects and accused persons in criminal proceedings as well as of requested persons in European Arrest Warrant proceedings.

Article 4

Budget

1. The indicative financial envelope for the implementation of the Programme for the period from 1 January 2028 to 31 December 2034 is set at EUR 798 000 000 in current prices.
2. Appropriations may be entered in the Union budget beyond 2034 to cover the expenses necessary and to enable the management of actions not completed by the end of the Programme.
3. The financial envelope referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article and the amounts of additional resources referred to in Article 5 may also be used for technical and administrative assistance for the implementation of the Programme, such as preparatory, monitoring, control, audit and evaluation activities, corporate information technology systems and platforms, information and communication activities, including corporate communication on the political priorities of the Union, and all other technical and administrative assistance or staff-related expenses incurred by the Commission for the management of the Programme.

Article 5

Additional resources

1. Member States, Union institutions, bodies and agencies, third countries, international organisations, international financial institutions, or other third parties, may make additional financial or non-financial contributions to the Programme. Additional financial contributions shall constitute external assigned revenue within the meaning

of Article 21(2), points (a), (d), or (e) or Article 21(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509.

2. Resources allocated to Member States under shared management may, at their request, be made available to the Programme. The Commission shall implement those resources directly or indirectly in accordance with Article 62(1), point (a) or (c), of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. They shall be additional to the amount referred to in Article 4(1) of this Regulation. Those resources shall be used for the benefit of the Member State concerned. Where the Commission has not entered into a legal commitment under direct or indirect management for additional amounts thus made available to the Programme, the corresponding uncommitted amounts may, at the request of the Member State concerned, be transferred back to one or more respective source programmes or their successors.

Article 6

Alternative, combined and cumulative funding

1. The Programme shall be implemented in synergy with other Union programmes. An action that has received a Union contribution from another programme may also receive a contribution under the Programme. The rules of the relevant Union programme shall apply to the corresponding contribution or a single set of rules may be applied to all contributions and a single legal commitment may be concluded. If the Union contribution is based on eligible costs, the cumulative support from the Union budget shall not exceed the total eligible costs of the action and may be calculated on a pro-rata basis in accordance with the documents setting out the conditions for support.
2. Award procedures under the Programme may be jointly conducted under direct or indirect management with Member States, Union institutions, bodies and agencies, third countries, international organisations, international financial institutions, or other third parties ('partners to the joint award procedure'), provided the protection of the financial interests of the Union is ensured. Such procedures shall be subject to a single set of rules and lead to the conclusion of single legal commitments. For that purpose, the partners to the joint award procedure may make resources available to the Programme in accordance with Article 5 of this Regulation, or the partners may be entrusted with the implementation of the award procedure, where applicable in accordance with Article 62(1), point (c), of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. For the purposes of Article 153(3) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, in joint award procedures the evaluation committee may be partially composed by members that are representatives of the partners in that procedure.

Article 7

Third countries associated to the Programme

1. The Programme may be opened to the participation of the following third countries through full or partial association, in accordance with the objectives laid down in Article 3 and in accordance with the relevant international agreements or any decisions adopted under the framework of those agreements and applicable to:
 - (a) members of the European Free Trade Association which are members of the European Economic Area, as well as European micro-states;
 - (b) acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates;
 - (c) European Neighbourhood Policy countries;

- (d) other third countries.
- 2. The association agreements for participation in the Programmes shall:
 - (a) ensure a fair balance as regards the contributions and benefits of the third country participating in the Programme;
 - (b) lay down the conditions of participation in the Programme, including the calculation of financial contributions, consisting of an operational contribution and a participation fee, to a programme and its general administrative costs;
 - (c) not confer on the third country any decision-making power in the Programme;
 - (d) guarantee the rights of the Union to ensure sound financial management and to protect its financial interests;
 - (e) where relevant, ensure the protection of security and public order interests of the Union.

For the purposes of the first subparagraph, point (d), the third country shall grant the necessary rights and access required under Regulations (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 and (EU, Euratom) 883/2013, and guarantee that enforcement decisions imposing a pecuniary obligation on the basis of Article 299 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, as well as judgements and orders of the Court of Justice of the European Union, are enforceable.

Article 8

Implementation and forms of Union funding

- 1. The Programme shall be implemented in accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, under direct management or under indirect management with entities referred to in Article 62(1), point (c), of that Regulation.
- 2. Union funding may be provided in any form in accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, in particular grants, procurement and non-financial donations.
- 3. Where Union funding is provided in the form of a grant, funding shall be provided as financing not linked to costs or, where necessary, simplified cost options, in accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. Funding may be provided in the form of actual eligible cost reimbursement only where the objectives of an action cannot be achieved otherwise.
- 4. For the purposes of Article 153(3) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, the evaluation committee may be composed partially or fully of independent external experts.

Article 9

Eligibility

- 1. Eligibility criteria shall be set to support achievement of the objectives laid down in Article 3 of this Regulation, in accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 and shall apply to all award procedures under the Programme.
- 2. In award procedures under direct and indirect management, one or more of the following legal entities may be eligible to receive Union funding:
 - (a) entities established in a Member State;
 - (b) entities established in an associated third country;

- (c) international organisations;
 - (d) other entities established in non-associated third countries where the funding of such entities is essential for implementing the action and contributes to the objectives laid down in Article 3.
3. In addition to Article 168(2) and (3) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, associated third countries referred to in Article 7 (1) of this Regulation may, where relevant, participate in and benefit from any procurement mechanisms set out in Article 168(2) and (3) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. Rules applicable to Member States shall be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to participating associated third countries.
 4. Award procedures affecting security or public order, in particular concerning strategic assets and interests of the Union or its Member States, shall be restricted in accordance with Article 136 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. In accordance with Article 136 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, eligibility restrictions shall apply to high-risk suppliers in line with Union law, for security reasons.
 5. The work programme referred to in Article 110 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, the calls for proposals and calls for tenders may further specify the eligibility criteria set out in this Regulation or set additional eligibility criteria for specific actions.
 6. An operating grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the European Judicial Training Network to cover expenditure associated with its permanent work programme.

Article 10

Work programme

The Programme shall be implemented by work programmes referred to in Article 110 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509.

Article 11

Repeal

Regulation (EU) 2021/693 is repealed with effect from 1 January 2028.

Article 12

Transitional provisions

1. This Regulation shall not affect the continuation or modification of the actions initiated under Regulation (EU) 2021/693, which shall continue to apply to the actions concerned until their closure.
2. The financial envelope for the Programme may also cover technical and administrative assistance expenses necessary to ensure the transition between the Programme and the measures adopted under Regulation (EU) 2021/693.

Article 13

Entry into force and application

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

It shall apply from 1 January 2028.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in the Member States in accordance with the Treaties.

Done at Brussels,

For the European Parliament
The President

For the Council
The President

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1. FRAMEWORK OF THE PROPOSAL/INITIATIVE

1.1. Title of the proposal/initiative

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council establishing the Justice programme and repealing Regulation (EU) No 2021/693 for the period 2028-2034.

1.2. Policy area(s) concerned

Judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, judicial training, access to justice, the rule of law, fundamental rights.

1.3. Objective(s)

1.3.1. General objective(s)

The Programme has the general objective of contributing to the further development of an efficient, inclusive, resilient and digitalised Union area of justice, based on the rule of law, mutual recognition and mutual trust, thereby also strengthening democracy and the protection of fundamental rights, and contributing to the Union's growth and competitiveness as well as to the digitalisation of justice at Union level.

1.3.2. Specific objective(s)

The Programme will have the following specific objectives:

Specific objective No 1:

To facilitate and support judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, and to promote the rule of law, in particular the independence, quality and efficiency of justice systems, including through improving the effective cross-border recognition and enforcement of judicial decisions.

Specific objective No 2:

To promote and support training of the judiciary and judicial staff, with a view to: promoting the rule of law, fundamental rights and democracy; fostering a common legal and judicial culture; ensuring the consistent and effective implementation of the relevant Union legal instruments; and providing a supportive environment for the digitalisation of judicial cooperation and justice systems.

Specific objective No 3:

To facilitate and support effective and non-discriminatory access to justice for all and effective remedy, including by digital means, by promoting efficient civil and criminal procedures and by promoting and supporting the rights of all victims of crime and the procedural rights of suspects and accused persons in criminal proceedings as well as of requested persons in European Arrest Warrant proceedings.

1.3.3. Expected result(s) and impact

Specify the effects which the proposal/initiative should have on the beneficiaries/groups targeted.

- Increased capacity - including digital capacity - of national practitioners, courts and authorities to address issues related to judicial cooperation in civil and criminal

matters and to implement EU instruments on civil and civil procedural law, as well as on criminal and criminal procedural law;

- Improved cross-border cooperation and mutual trust between judicial authorities responsible for judicial cooperation in civil, commercial and criminal matters, and improved cooperation and coordination between these authorities and other responsible agencies and institutions across the EU;

- Acceleration of proceedings in relation to judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters;

- Improved situation of persons subject to measures in the field of judicial cooperation in criminal matters, enhancement of their social rehabilitation and re-integrations, reduced risks of violation of their fundamental rights;

- Enhanced capacity and visibility of EU level Networks active in the areas of judicial training, access to justice and judicial cooperation;

- Improved promotion of the rule of law, independence and impartiality of the judiciary, including by supporting the efforts to improve the effectiveness of national justice systems, particularly through collection of information on rule of law situation at national level, the collection of data on the independence, quality and efficiency of national justice systems, promotion and upholding of European standards and best practices in these areas;

- Strengthened cooperation and exchange of information between competent national authorities, European networks, NGOs and/or professional organisations in relation to the rights of persons suspected or accused of crime and of victims of crime;

- Reduced risks of breaches of fair trial rights;

- Facilitating cooperation in relation to forms of serious crime, such as corruption, terrorism and environmental crime;

- Improved public awareness and knowledge, also among relevant policy makers, about procedural rights of suspected and accused persons and victims' rights at both EU and national level;

- Increased awareness and knowledge on the use of digital and AI tools in criminal proceedings (in particular the use of videoconferencing technology) and its impact (chances and risks) on the procedural rights of suspected and accused persons and victims' rights at both EU and national level;

- Increased awareness and knowledge about the specific needs of the most vulnerable victims of crimes, including victims of terrorism, and most vulnerable suspects and accused persons;

- Improved knowledge about legal remedies available for victims in case of a violation of their rights as well as about challenges and benefits for victims related to digitalisation of justice;

- Improved support services to victims;

- Enhanced knowledge of EU civil law, commercial law, criminal law and fundamental rights related instruments (including on the scope of application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and on existing remedies and redress) among justice professionals;

- Increased ‘Digital capacity’ of justice professionals to use digital tools and infrastructures effectively, handle the impact of digitalisation on court proceedings and procedural rights and apply cross-border cooperation tools;
- Increased legal certainty for citizens and businesses.

1.3.4. *Indicators of performance*

Specify the indicators for monitoring progress and achievements.

The output and result indicators for the purpose of monitoring progress and achievements of this Programme will correspond to the common indicators provided under Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council [Performance Regulation]¹.

1.4. **The proposal/initiative relates to:**

- ☐ a new action
- ☐ a new action following a pilot project / preparatory action²
- ☒ the extension of an existing action
- ☐ a merger or redirection of one or more actions towards another/a new action

1.5. **Grounds for the proposal/initiative**

1.5.1. *Requirement(s) to be met in the short or long term including a detailed timeline for roll-out of the implementation of the initiative*

Whereas legislation is a key tool to implement the Union’s objectives in the area of justice, it needs to be complemented by other means. In this context, funding has an important role to play to enhance the effectiveness of legislation by increasing knowledge, awareness and capacity of justice professionals and other key stakeholders, through supporting, for instance:

- dissemination of information and awareness raising, including support for national and European campaigns to inform people of their rights and forums for discussion for stakeholders to enhance the knowledge of the Programme and the transferability of its results;
- training, exchanges and capacity building for the judiciary and judicial staff and other practitioners and relevant national authorities, to equip them with the tools to effectively put Union rights and policies into practice.

Funding has also a central role in promoting cooperation at transnational level and developing mutual trust, through, for instance:

- developing and strengthening the capacity of key European-level networks, European-level judicial associations and European level judicial training providers to assist with the preparation of future initiatives in the areas covered by the Programme, as well as to promote their consistent implementation across Europe;
- cross-border cooperation on enforcement and coordination of other national actions to maximise and deepen the impact of Union level actions;

¹ Proposal for a Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a budget expenditure tracking and performance framework and other horizontal rules for the Union programmes and activities, COM/2025/545 final.

² As referred to in Article 58(2), point (a) or (b) of Regulation (EU) 2024/2509.

- cross-border interoperability of systems and applications by deploying and maintaining innovative techniques and technologies, notably digital ones.

Additionally, funding should also support, for instance:

- Research, studies, surveys, evaluations, impact assessments, analytical, monitoring and other support activities which allow to be always updated on new improvements and challenges on the ground. The results of these activities will then feed into the development and implementation of Union policies and ensure that they are evidence-based, well targeted and well structured.

The Programme will contribute to tackling common transnational challenges by taking into account the specific nature and challenges of the different policy areas, their different target groups and their particular needs. By bringing together support in these areas, the Union will be better equipped to address recurrent but also new and emerging policy priorities.

The Programme will publish every year around four calls for proposals (including operating grant calls) and support some indirect management activities with international organisations. Some calls will be biennial. In addition to this, the Programme will undertake some actions through contracts following public procurement. The types of activities funded may include, for example: conferences, expert meetings, meetings of committees in support of implementing EU legislative acts, seminars, communication, information and visibility activities; development of training material and development and maintenance of IT platforms and systems; surveys, studies and impact assessments.

All these activities will be implemented over the whole period 2028-2034. It is difficult to set a precise roll-out at this stage, as the Programme has been conceived to remain flexible enough to adapt to new emerging priorities and needs.

- 1.5.2. *Added value of EU involvement (it may result from different factors, e.g. coordination gains, legal certainty, greater effectiveness or complementarities). For the purposes of this section 'added value of EU involvement' is the value resulting from EU action, that is additional to the value that would have been otherwise created by Member States alone.*

Reasons for action at EU level (ex ante)

Despite progress, the EU continues to face major cross-border justice challenges requiring coordinated action. The Justice programme remains highly relevant and impactful, helping Member States uphold EU values and fundamental rights. Without EU-level support, national responses would be fragmented, inefficient and uneven, especially in areas like judicial training, access to justice, and digitalisation. EU funding enables joint solutions, legal cooperation, and interoperability of justice systems, particularly benefiting smaller Member States. It also helps fill national gaps, sustain EU-wide legal networks and build a common European legal culture. The Justice programme is vital for supporting CSOs working in the field of access to justice and transnational projects that could not be realised otherwise. EU action ensures uniform standards, promotes fair access to justice, strengthens the Single Market and boosts competitiveness by reducing legal uncertainty. It also key to support the EU enlargement process and to ensure coherence between internal and external justice policies, thereby reinforcing the EU's role globally and safeguarding its legal order.

Expected generated EU added value (ex post)

Collaboration and networking between stakeholders will lead to the dissemination of best practices, in particular innovative and integrated approaches in different Member States. The participants in the activities funded by the Programme will then act as multipliers in their respective professional activities within their Member State. European Union intervention allows for these activities to be pursued consistently across the Union and brings economies of scale.

1.5.3. *Lessons learned from similar experiences in the past*

The mid-term evaluation of the 2021-2027 Justice programme showed that the Programme continues to effectively strengthen cross-border judicial cooperation and mutual trust among Member States as well as judicial training and access to justice for vulnerable groups. The Programme is also increasingly promoting digitalisation, thereby improving access to legal information and modernising judicial cooperation tools. The evaluation confirmed the overall effectiveness of the Programme and the validity of its targeted objectives, but some aspects have been identified for improvement, in particular: the limited budget constrains the Programme's ability to meet growing digital needs; awareness remains uneven, with CSOs less informed than public authorities and the Programme is less known in some countries. Additionally, some beneficiaries continue to experience challenges with the application procedure and reporting requirements.

1.5.4. *Compatibility with the multiannual financial framework and possible synergies with other appropriate instruments*

The initiative is part of the 2028-2034 Multiannual Financial Framework proposal. The Programme will seek synergies, consistency and complementarities with other Union instruments supporting policy areas which are closely interlinked, such as with the AgoraEU programme and the programmes in the areas of asylum, migration and integration, border management and internal security, consumers, employment, education, social inclusion, research and innovation. Cooperation will be sought as well as with external actions supported by Global Europe and with the National and Regional Partnership Plans for what concerns judicial reforms and digitalisation of national justice systems. Duplication with activities under these other programmes will be avoided.

1.5.5. *Assessment of the different available financing options, including scope for redeployment*

N/A.

1.6. Duration of the proposal/initiative and of its financial impact

☒ **limited duration**

☒ in effect from 01/01/2028 to 31/12/2034

☒ financial impact from 2028 to 2034 for commitment appropriations and from 2028 to 2034 for payment appropriations.

☐ **unlimited duration**

Implementation with a start-up period from YYYY to YYYY,
followed by full-scale operation.

1.7. Method(s) of budget implementation planned³

☒ **Direct management** by the Commission

☒ by its departments, including by its staff in the Union delegations;

☐ by the executive agencies

☐ **Shared management** with the Member States

☒ **Indirect management** by entrusting budget implementation tasks to:

☐ third countries or the bodies they have designated

☒ international organisations and their agencies (e.g. CoE, OECD, UNESCO...)

☐ the European Investment Bank and the European Investment Fund

☐ bodies referred to in Articles 70 and 71 of the Regulation (EU) 2024/2509)

☒ public law bodies (e.g. Pillar assessed bodies)

☒ bodies governed by private law with a public service mission to the extent that they are provided with adequate financial guarantees (e.g. Pillar assessed bodies)

☒ bodies governed by the private law of a Member State that are entrusted with the implementation of a public-private partnership and that are provided with adequate financial guarantees (e.g. Pillar assessed bodies)

☐ bodies or persons entrusted with the implementation of specific actions in the common foreign and security policy pursuant to Title V of the Treaty on European Union, and identified in the relevant basic act

☐ bodies established in a Member State, governed by the private law of a Member State or Union law and eligible to be entrusted, in accordance with sector-specific rules, with the implementation of Union funds or budgetary guarantees, to the extent that such bodies are controlled by public law bodies or by bodies governed by private law with a public service mission, and are provided with adequate financial guarantees in the form of joint and several liability by the controlling bodies or equivalent financial guarantees and which may be, for each action, limited to the maximum amount of the Union support.

³ Details of budget implementation methods and references to the Financial Regulation may be found on the BUDGpedia site: <https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/corp/budget/financial-rules/budget-implementation/Pages/implementation-methods.aspx>.

Comments

The Programme will be implemented under direct management as well as under indirect management through international organisations (e.g. CoE, UNESCO, OECD...)

2. MANAGEMENT MEASURES

2.1. Monitoring and reporting rules

This initiative will be monitored through the performance framework for the 2028-2034 budget established under Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council [Performance Regulation]. The performance framework also sets out the rules for evaluations, which shall be conducted in accordance with the Commission's Better Regulation Guidelines and will be based on indicators relevant to the objectives of the Programme.

2.2. Management and control system(s)

2.2.1. *Justification of the budget implementation method(s), the funding implementation mechanism(s), the payment modalities and the control strategy proposed*

The Justice programme will be managed directly by the Commission as this allows to better adapt the Programme to the needs of the different policies, have more flexibility to re-adjust priorities in case of emerging needs and establish direct contacts with beneficiaries/contractors and stakeholders directly engaged in activities that serve relevant Union policies. The implementation mode of the 2021-2027 Programme (direct and indirect management) has so far proved effective and suitable for the needs of the Programme and its beneficiaries. The use of simplified forms of funding will remain the standard form of contribution for reimbursing grants.

2.2.2. *Information concerning the risks identified and the internal control system(s) set up to mitigate them*

The Programme faces the same risks as other Commission programmes that target beneficiaries which are diverse in nature. In particular, some beneficiaries are not recurring or do not have extensive administrative structures. Risks are mainly related to (1) ensuring quality of selected projects and their subsequent technical implementation; (2) risk of inefficient or non-economic use of funds awarded, both for grants and procurement; (3) fraud.

Most of these risks are expected to be reduced thanks to: (1) careful design of calls for proposals; (2) guidance to applicants and beneficiaries; (3) the use of the simplified cost options of unit costs, flat rates and lump sums, which have been effectively applied in the 2021-2027 MFF and are provided in the Regulation (EU) 2024/2509; (4) the use of corporate procedures and systems for the management of proposals and grants (e.g. grants vademecum, eGrants etc.) to ensure a full alignment with best practice in all stages of the grant and procurement lifecycles; (5) the measures laid down in the anti-fraud strategy.

The control system envisaged for the 2028-2034 Programme will be a continuation of the 2021-2027 control system. The control strategy is composed of different building blocks: (1) programming, evaluation and selection of proposals to ensure that only best proposals are funded; (2) signing and monitoring of grant agreements, subject to *ex ante* verification at both financial and policy level; (3) *ex post* audits based on a 'detection strategy' aimed at identifying a maximum of anomalies in view of recovering undue payments.

2.2.3. *Estimation and justification of the cost-effectiveness of the controls (ratio between the control costs and the value of the related funds managed), and assessment of the expected levels of risk of error (at payment & at closure)*

The cost of controls of the Programme amounts to approximately 3.2% of the payments done by the Commission. This is expected to stay stable or slightly decrease if the use of simplified cost options is further expanded. The objective for the management and control system is to maintain the expected levels of risk of error (at payment and at closure) below the materiality threshold of 2%.

2.3. **Measures to prevent fraud and irregularities**

DG JUST will continue to apply its Anti-Fraud Strategy (updated in June 2024) in line with the Commission's Anti-Fraud Strategy (CAFS) in order to ensure, inter alia, that its internal anti-fraud related controls are fully aligned with the CAFS and that its fraud risk management approach is geared to identify fraud risk cases and adequate responses.

The Anti-fraud strategy enables fraud risk to be addressed, mainly via measures to prevent irregularity which are then escalated in the event of fraud detection. The following measures will continue to be implemented: desk monitoring, monitoring missions in accordance with a defined monitoring strategy, clear reporting requirements in the grant agreements with beneficiaries, kick-off meetings with new beneficiaries, possibility to cut grants upon non-delivery of results or non-compliance with certain funding conditions such as those linked to information, communication and visibility.

Beneficiaries in exclusion cases are submitted to the Early Detection and Exclusion Database (EDES) and cases are followed up with OLAF and the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO).

3. ESTIMATED FINANCIAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL/INITIATIVE

3.1. Heading(s) of the multiannual financial framework and expenditure budget line(s) affected

New budget lines requested

In order of multiannual financial framework headings and budget lines.

Heading of multiannual financial framework	Budget line	Type of expenditure	Contribution			
	Number	Non-diff.	from EFTA countries	from candidate countries and potential candidates	from other third countries	other assigned revenue
2	06 01 04 Support expenditure for Justice	Non-diff.	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO
2	06 05 01 Justice	Diff.	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO

3.2. Estimated financial impact of the proposal on appropriations

3.2.1. Summary of estimated impact on operational appropriations

- ☐ The proposal/initiative does not require the use of operational appropriations
- ☒ The proposal/initiative requires the use of operational appropriations, as explained below

3.2.1.1. Appropriations from voted budget EUR million (to three decimal places)

Heading of multiannual financial framework	Number	2
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DG: <JUST.>			Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	TOTAL MFF 2028-2034
			2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	
Operational appropriations										
06 05 01 Justice	Commitments	(1b)	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm
	Payments	(2b)	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm
Appropriations of an administrative nature financed from the envelope of specific programmes ^[1]										
06 01 04 support expenditure for Justice		(3)	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm
TOTAL appropriations for DG <JUST>	Commitments	=1a+1b+3	101	105	109	114	118	123	128	798
	Payments	=2a+2b+3	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm

Mandatory table

	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	TOTAL MFF 2028- 2034
	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	

TOTAL operational appropriations	Commitments	(4)	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm
	Payments	(5)	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm
TOTAL appropriations of an administrative nature financed from the envelope for specific programmes		(6)	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm
TOTAL appropriations under HEADING <2> of the multiannual financial framework	Commitments	=4+6	101	105	109	114	118	123	128	798
	Payments	=5+6	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm

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Heading of multiannual financial framework	4	‘Administrative expenditure’ ¹
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EUR million (to three decimal places)

DG: <JUST>	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	TOTAL MFF 2028-2034
	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	
Human resources	9,470	9,470	9,470	9,470	9,470	9,470	9,470	66,290
Other administrative expenditure	0,380	0,387	0,395	0,403	0,411	0,420	0,428	2,824

¹ The necessary appropriations should be determined using the annual average cost figures available on the appropriate BUDGpedia webpage.

TOTAL DG <JUST>	Appropriations	9,850	9,857	9,865	9,873	9,881	9,890	9,898	69,114
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EUR million (to three decimal places)

		Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	TOTAL MFF 2028- 2034
		2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	
TOTAL appropriations under HEADINGS 1 to 4	Commitments	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm
of the multiannual financial framework	Payments	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm	pm

3.2.2. Estimated output funded from operational appropriations (not to be completed for decentralised agencies)

The output and result indicators for the purpose of monitoring progress and achievements of this programme will correspond to the common indicators provided under Regulation (EU) [XXX]* of the European Parliament and of the Council [Performance].

Commitment appropriations in EUR million (to three decimal places)

Indicate objectiv es and outputs			Year 2028		Year 2029		Year 2030		Year 2031		Enter as many years as necessary to show the duration of the impact (see Section1.6)						TOTAL	
	OUTPUTS																	
	Typ e ²	Avera ge cost	No	Cost	No	Cost	No	Cost	No	Cost	No	Cost	No	Cost	No	Cost	Total No	Total cost
↓																		
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE No ³ ...																		

² Outputs are products and services to be supplied (e.g. number of student exchanges financed, number of km of roads built, etc.).

³ As described in Section 1.3.2. 'Specific objective(s)'.

- Output																		
- Output																		
- Output																		
Subtotal for specific objective No 1																		
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE No 2 ...																		
- Output																		
Subtotal for specific objective No 2																		
TOTALS																		

3.2.3. Summary of estimated impact on administrative appropriations

☐ The proposal/initiative does not require the use of appropriations of an administrative nature

☒ The proposal/initiative requires the use of appropriations of an administrative nature, as explained below

3.2.3.1. Appropriations from voted budget

VOTED APPROPRIATIONS	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	TOTAL 2028 - 2034
	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	
HEADING 4								
Human resources	9,470	9,470	9,470	9,470	9,470	9,470	9,470	66,290
Other administrative expenditure	0,380	0,387	0,395	0,403	0,411	0,420	0,428	2,824
Subtotal HEADING 4	9,850	9,857	9,865	9,873	9,881	9,890	9,898	69,114
Outside HEADING 4								
Human resources	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	3,535
Other expenditure of an administrative nature	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.
Subtotal outside HEADING 4	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	3,535
TOTAL	10,355	10,362	10,370	10,378	10,386	10,395	10,403	72,649

3.2.3.2. Appropriations from external assigned revenues (NA)

EXTERNAL ASSIGNED REVENUES				Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	TOTAL 2028 - 2034
				2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	
HEADING 4											
Human resources				0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Other administrative expenditure				0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Subtotal HEADING 4				0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Outside HEADING 4											
Human resources				0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Other expenditure of an administrative nature				0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Subtotal outside HEADING 4				0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
TOTAL				0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

3.2.3.3. Total appropriations

TOTAL VOTED APPROPRIATIONS + EXTERNAL ASSIGNED REVENUES				Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	TOTAL 2028 - 2034
				2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	
			HEADING 4								
Human resources				9,470	9,470	9,470	9,470	9,470	9,470	9,470	66,290

Other administrative expenditure	0,380	0,387	0,395	0,403	0,411	0,420	0,428	2,824
Subtotal HEADING 4	9,850	9,857	9,865	9,873	9,881	9,890	9,898	69,114
Outside HEADING 4								
Human resources	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	3,535
Other expenditure of an administrative nature	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.
Subtotal outside HEADING 4	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	0,505	3,535
TOTAL	10,355	10,362	10,370	10,378	10,386	10,395	10,403	72,649

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The appropriations required for human resources and other expenditure of an administrative nature will be met by appropriations from the DG that are already assigned to management of the action and/or have been redeployed within the DG, together, if necessary, with any additional allocation which may be granted to the managing DG under the annual allocation procedure and in the light of budgetary constraints.

3.2.4. Estimated requirements of human resources

- ☐ The proposal/initiative does not require the use of human resources
- ☒ The proposal/initiative requires the use of human resources, as explained below

3.2.4.1. Financed from voted budget

Estimate to be expressed in full-time equivalent units (FTEs)

VOTED APPROPRIATIONS	Year 2028	Year 2029	Year 2030	Year 2031	Year 2032	Year 2033	Year 2034
• Establishment plan posts (officials and temporary staff)							
20 01 02 01 (Headquarters and Commission's Representation Offices)	45	45	45	45	45	45	45
20 01 02 03 (EU Delegations)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
01 01 01 01 (Indirect research)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
01 01 01 11 (Direct research)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other budget lines (specify)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
• External staff (in FTEs)							
20 02 01 (AC, END from the 'global envelope')	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
20 02 03 (AC, AL, END and JPD in the EU Delegations)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin. Support line 06 01 04	- at Headquarters	5	5	5	5	5	5
	- in EU Delegations	0	0	0	0	0	0
01 01 01 02 (AC, END - Indirect research)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
01 01 01 12 (AC, END - Direct research)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other budget lines (specify) - Heading 7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other budget lines (specify) - Outside Heading 7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
06 01 04	- in EU Delegations	0	0	0	0	0	0

01 01 01 02 (AC, END - Indirect research)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
01 01 01 12 (AC, END - Direct research)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other budget lines (specify) - Heading 7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other budget lines (specify) - Outside Heading 7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	60	60	60	60	60	60	60

3.2.4.2. Financed from external assigned revenues (NA)

EXTERNAL ASSIGNED REVENUES		Year 2028	Year 2029	Year 2030	Year 2031	Year 2032	Year 2033	Year 2034
Establishment plan posts (officials and temporary staff)								
20 01 02 01 (Headquarters and Commission's Representation Offices)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20 01 02 03 (EU Delegations)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(Indirect research)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(Direct research)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other budget lines (specify)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
• External staff (in full time equivalent units)								
20 02 01 (AC, END from the 'global envelope')		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20 02 03 (AC, AL, END and JPD in the EU Delegations)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin. Support line [XX.01.YY.YY]	- at Headquarters	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	- in EU Delegations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(AC, END - Indirect research)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(AC, END - Direct research)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other budget lines (specify) - Heading 4		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other budget lines (specify) - Outside Heading 4		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		0	0	0	0	0	0	0

3.2.4.3. Total requirements of human resources

TOTAL VOTED APPROPRIATIONS + EXTERNAL ASSIGNED REVENUES		Year 2028	Year 2029	Year 2030	Year 2031	Year 2032	Year 2033	Year 2034
Establishment plan posts (officials and temporary staff)								
20 01 02 01 (Headquarters and Commission's Representation Offices)		45	45	45	45	45	45	45
20 01 02 03 (EU Delegations)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(Indirect research)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0

(Direct research)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other budget lines (specify)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
• External staff (in full time equivalent units)								
20 02 01 (AC, END from the 'global envelope')		10	10	10	10	10	10	10
20 02 03 (AC, AL, END and JPD in the EU Delegations)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin. Support line	- at Headquarters	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
06 01 04	- in EU Delegations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(AC, END - Indirect research)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(AC, END - Direct research)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other budget lines (specify) - Heading 4		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other budget lines (specify) - Outside Heading 4		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		60	60	60	60	60	60	60

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The staff required to implement the proposal (in FTEs):

	To be covered by current staff available in the Commission services	Exceptional additional staff*		
		To be financed under Heading 4 or Research	To be financed from BA line	To be financed from fees
Establishment plan posts	30	15	N/A	
External staff (CA, SNEs, INT)	2	8	5	

Method of calculation, description of tasks to be carried out and reasoned request

DG JUST staff working on the 2021-2027 Justice programme combines the operational staff, working full time on the management of the Programme, throughout all phases of the programme cycles (work programme, calls for proposals, evaluation, contracting and implementation) as well as having initiation and verification roles, with staff from policy units (ensuring the subject-matter expertise) and staff ensuring the overall coordination and horizontal tasks.

The estimation of the operational staff working on the Programme is based on a distribution corresponding to the share of Justice budget against the total programme budget managed by the DG, which also includes the CERV programme and the consumer strand of the Single Market Programme.

The estimation of staff from policy units is based on the high number of policies and pieces of legislation supported by the Justice programme implementation, hence on policy units involvement at key stages of the process, such as preparation of the calls for proposals, project selection and implementation.

Operational, policy and coordination staff combined amount to 60 FTE, including 5 CA funded from outside Heading 4 (former BA lines), which is considered necessary to effectively cater for the expanded more labour intensive portfolio – including, in particular, initiatives such as the digitalisation of justice, increased number of financial operations for the implementation of the Programme, and in line with the thematic scope of the Programme as per political guidelines.

Starting from the current staffing level as baseline, and considering the 2.7 fold increase in the envelope of the Justice programme in the next MFF, the FTEs requested is necessary to enable DG JUST to cope with the actions required to reach the political objectives of the Von der Leyen II Commission with the 2028-2034 Justice programme being instrumental in successfully delivering on the Commission's ambitions.

There is no margin in the current teams to further redeploy staff between functions without putting at risk the credibility of the Commission to deliver in the areas of DG JUST's competence.

Officials and temporary staff	45
External staff	15

3.2.5. Overview of estimated impact on digital technology-related investments

TOTAL Digital and IT appropriations	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	TOTAL MFF 2028 - 2034
	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	
HEADING 4								
IT expenditure (corporate)	0.492	0.492	0.492	0.492	0.492	0.492	0.492	3.444
Subtotal HEADING 4	0.492	0.492	0.492	0.492	0.492	0.492	0.492	3.444
Outside HEADING 4								
Policy IT expenditure on operational programmes	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	259
Subtotal outside HEADING 4	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	259
TOTAL	37.492	37.492	37.492	37.492	37.492	37.492	37.492	262.444

3.2.6. Compatibility with the current multiannual financial framework

The initiative is consistent with the proposal for the MFF 2028-2034.

3.2.7. Third-party contributions

The proposal/initiative:

☒ does not provide for co-financing by third parties

☐ provides for the co-financing by third parties estimated below:

Appropriations in EUR million (to three decimal places)

	Year 2028	Year 2029	Year 2030	Year 2031	Year 2032	Year 2033	Year 2034	Total
Specify the co-financing body								
TOTAL appropriations co-financed								

3.3. Estimated impact on revenue

☒ The proposal/initiative has no financial impact on revenue.

☐ The proposal/initiative has the following financial impact:

☐ on own resources

☐ on other revenue

☐ please indicate, if the revenue is assigned to expenditure lines

EUR million (to three decimal places)

Budget revenue line:	Appropriations available for the current financial year	Impact of the proposal/initiative						
		Year 2028	Year 2029	Year 2030	Year 2031	Year 2032	Year 2033	Year 2034
Article								

For assigned revenue, specify the budget expenditure line(s) affected.

[...]

Other remarks (e.g. method/formula used for calculating the impact on revenue or any other information).

[...]

4. DIGITAL DIMENSIONS

4.1. Requirements of digital relevance

The Justice programme has key digital relevance as it will continue to fund a number of EU-level IT systems supporting cross-border judicial cooperation. These systems ensure the implementation of different legal instruments and the proper functioning of the cross-border judicial cooperation.

Reference to the requirement	Requirement description	Actors affected or concerned by the requirement	High-level Processes	Categories
Article 4	[...] Technical and administrative assistance for the implementation of the Programme such as preparatory, monitoring, control, audit and evaluation activities, corporate information technology systems and platforms...	European Commission; Beneficiaries	Programme implementation through direct grant management	Digital solutions
Article 3, par. 1	[...] as well as to the digitalisation of justice at EU level.	European Commission; Beneficiaries	Programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation	Digital solutions, data
Article 3, par. 2 (b) Article 4	[...] promoting the rule of law, fundamental rights and democracy. [...] Technical and administrative	European Commission; Beneficiaries	Dissemination, support to the Programme	Digital solutions

	assistance for the implementation of the Programme such as... information and communication activities, including corporate communication on the political priorities of the Union.			
Article 3, par. 2 (c)	[...] promoting efficient civil and criminal procedures and... promoting... the rights of all victims of crime and the procedural rights of suspects and accused persons in criminal proceedings as well as of requested persons in EAW proceedings.	European Commission; Beneficiaries	Dissemination, support to the Programme	Digital solutions
Article 4	[...] Technical and administrative assistance for the implementation of the Programme			

	such as... information and communication activities, including corporate communication on the political priorities of the Union.			
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4.2. Data

Type of data	Reference(s) to the requirement	Standard and/or specification (if applicable)
Countries, organisations, budget, participants and priorities per project	Article 4, Article 3, par. 1 and par. 2 (b) and (c) Regulation (EU) XXX [Performance Regulation]	Commission monitoring and reporting tools and databases, including eGrants.

Alignment with the European Data Strategy

The provisions under the proposal support interoperability, reusability, and secure data sharing, in line with the European Data Strategy. Where personal data are processed (e.g. participants), it aligns with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)¹. The architecture is also consistent with the Open Data Directive², as relevant aggregated, non-personal data may be made available for reuse by researchers or public bodies.

Alignment with EU Digital Identity Framework

The proposal aligns with the EU Digital Identity Framework, which enables secure identification and the use of electronic attestations of attributes to verify specific characteristics or qualifications of individuals, economic operators and organisations, including in the context of justice and legal proceedings. Furthermore, the proposal will be compatible with the forthcoming European Business Wallets, which will further enable the sharing of attestations in professional contexts, such as in cross-border legal proceedings, allowing legal professionals and businesses to securely and efficiently share verified information with courts, public administrations, and other partners, thereby reducing administrative burdens and increasing trust in digital justice systems.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation), *OJ L 119*, 4.5.2016, pp. 1–88, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/679/oj>.

² Directive (EU) 2019/1024 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on open data and the re-use of public sector information (recast), *OJ L 172*, 26.6.2019, pp. 56–83, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/1024/oj>.

Alignment with the once-only principle

Dashboards established are the source of traceability and reusability of the data available from the Programme implementation. Data comes from the project lifecycle tools/documents (e.g. application forms, final reports, participant surveys). Traceability and reusability of the data available from the Programme implementation will be ensured. The data will be recorded via the project lifecycle documents and made accessible, in line with the provisions of the Regulation (EU) XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council [Performance Regulation] regarding transparency of information on programmes performance and achievements through the Single Gateway portal.

Data flows

Type of data	Reference(s) to the requirement(s)	Actor who provides the data	Actor who receives the data	Trigger for the data exchange	Frequency (if applicable)
Countries, organisations, budget, participants and priorities per project	Article 4, Article 3, par. 1 and par. 2 (b) and (c) Regulation (EU) XXX [Performance Regulation]	Beneficiaries	General public Commission European Parliament Council of the European Union	Regulation (EU) XXX [Performance Regulation]: Article XXX (monitoring) and Article XXX (implementation report and retrospective evaluations). Regular programme reporting	Regulation (EU) XXX [Performance Regulation]: Article XXX (monitoring) and Article XXX (implementation report and retrospective evaluations).

General comment:

The exchange of data between the Member States is of key importance for the success of the various initiatives in the field of digitalisation of justice. A number of initiatives are dependent on data and its availability. A good example is the EU Strategy for the digitalisation of justice, planned to be adopted by the end of 2025. Another example for the exchange of data is the European Legal Data Space³, which aims to ensure the availability of judicial data, including for the purposes of training AI. All these systems will be supported and sustained through the Justice programme.

4.3. Digital solutions

Digital	Reference(s)	Main	Responsi	How is	How is	Use of AI
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³ <https://data.europa.eu/en/ELDS>.

solution	) to the requirements	mandated functionalities	ble body	accessibility catered for?	reusability considered?	technologies (if applicable)
Digital solution #1 – Direct Grant Management platform	Article 4	Direct Grant Management	European Commission	In accordance with Commission Standard	//	The platform shall leverage the use of artificial intelligence where relevant and adhering with the precautionary principle.
Digital solution #2 – Platform(s) to support the Programme	Article 3, par. 1 and par. 2 (b) and (c) and Article 4	Disseminate Programme's results	European Commission	In accordance with Commission Standard	//	The platform(s) shall leverage the use of artificial intelligence where relevant and adhering with the precautionary principle.
Digital solution #1 - Direct Grant Management platform						
Digital and/or sectorial policy (when these are applicable)			Explanation on how it aligns			

AI Act⁴	When leveraging AI, the European Commission will ensure the compliance with the AI Act.
EU Cybersecurity framework⁵	Without prejudice to Regulation (EU) 2016/679, the European Commission shall ensure the security, integrity, authenticity and confidentiality of the data collected and stored for the purpose of this regulation
EU Digital Identity Framework, European Business Wallets	In accordance with the EU Digital Identity Framework, the Commission shall ensure that the grant management platform is interoperable with the EU Digital Identity Wallets and the forthcoming European Business Wallets to enable identification, authentication, the exchange of electronic attestations of attributes and the use of trust services.”
Single Digital Gateway⁶ and IMI⁷	NA
Others	NA

Digital solution #2 - Platform(s) to support the Programme

Digital and/or sectorial policy (when these are applicable)	Explanation on how it aligns
AI Act	When leveraging AI, the European Commission will ensure the compliance with the AI Act.
EU Cybersecurity framework	Without prejudice to Regulation (EU) 2016/679, the European Commission shall ensure the security, integrity, authenticity

⁴ Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence and amending Regulations (EC) No 300/2008, (EU) No 167/2013, (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2018/1139 and (EU) 2019/2144 and Directives 2014/90/EU, (EU) 2016/797 and (EU) 2020/1828 (Artificial Intelligence Act), *OJ L*, 2024/1689, 12.7.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj>.

⁵ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2023/2841 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2023 laying down measures for a high common level of cybersecurity at the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the Union, *OJ L*, 2023/2841, 18.12.2023, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2841/oj>.

⁶ https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/single-market/single-digital-gateway_en.

⁷ Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on administrative cooperation through the Internal Market Information System and repealing Commission Decision 2008/49/EC (‘the IMI Regulation’), *OJ L* 316, 14.11.2012, pp. 1–11, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2012/1024/oj>.

	and confidentiality of the data collected and stored for the purpose of this regulation
<i>EU Digital Identity Framework, European Business Wallets</i>	In accordance with the EU Digital Identity Framework, the Commission shall ensure that these platforms are interoperable with the EU Digital Identity Wallets and the forthcoming European Business Wallets to enable identification, authentication, the exchange of electronic attestations of attributes and the use of trust services.”
<i>Single Digital Gateway and IMI</i>	NA
<i>Others</i>	NA

General comment:

The Justice programme will continue to fund a number of digital solutions, which have been developed over the years, as well as will support the development of new IT systems. Some examples of IT systems, which will be funded by the continuation of the Justice programme, are the European e-Justice Portal, which is a one stop-shop for all justice matters, and the decentralised IT system developed under Regulation (EU) 2023/2844⁸ for the digitalisation of cross-border judicial cooperation. The Justice programme is used to fund IT systems at EU level stemming from legal instruments or from the voluntary cooperation of Member States. In both cases, these are systems with high political and operational importance for Member States, which support the smooth day-to-day functioning of the justice sector by enhancing efficiency and ensuring interoperability.

4.4. Interoperability assessment

Interoperability is essential for the success of the different IT systems and tools. The Justice programme promotes the interoperability of national systems in order to facilitate their interconnection at EU level and the possibility to develop decentralised systems, facilitating cross-border cooperation. Systems developed at EU level are set up with the idea that all Member States should be able to connect their national systems to a central one, but mostly between each other, by using commonly agreed digital procedural standards as provided by the Digitalisation Regulation. The EU-level solution needs to be interoperable on its own to allow and support the integration with existing and newly developed national solutions.

4.5. Measures to support digital implementation

In connection with the future planning, all justice-related legal instruments foresee, or

⁸ Regulation (EU) 2023/2844 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2023 on the digitalisation of judicial cooperation and access to justice in cross-border civil, commercial and criminal matters, and amending certain acts in the field of judicial cooperation, OJ L, 2023/2844, 27.12.2023, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2844/oj>.

are expected to foresee, a certain level of digitalisation. This will create the obligation for the EU to develop new systems and solutions but also for the Member States to connect to those systems. In this regard, the Justice programme will support the digital implementation through different measures. This might include ICT procurement procedures, internal development of the EU-level solution and support for the Member States in the form of exchange of expertise, provision of action grants or others.