

2026 Rule of Law Report - targeted stakeholder consultation

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

The annual Rule of Law Report lies at the centre of the Annual Rule of Law Cycle, which acts as a preventive tool, deepening multilateral dialogue and joint awareness of rule of law issues. So far, six editions of the Rule of Law Report have been published since 2020.

As every year, the Commission would like to invite the stakeholders to provide contributions to the 2026 Rule of Law Report. On the basis of these contributions and on-going developments, further targeted questions may be shared at a later stage of preparation of the 2026 Rule of Law Report, in particular in the context of country visits, or bilateral contacts.

The Commission invites stakeholders to provide contributions which include:

- (1) developments and measures taken in relation to the recommendations in the 2025 report,**
- (2) developments related to topics covered in the 2025 country chapters, as well as any other new developments related to the rule of law.**

The input should consist of a short summary, if possible in English, covering the areas referred to below. Legislation or other documents may be referenced with a link. Contributions should focus on significant developments since the last Rule of Law Report both as regards the legal framework and its implementation in practice.

This questionnaire also integrates the separate questionnaire on the single market from last year. In addition to these specific questions, respondents to the questionnaire are invited to consider the Single Market dimension, including any relevant cross-border issues, in all their answers.

Where questions of particular relevance under the single market dimension, this is indicated before the relevant question.

[1] Unless the information was already submitted in the input for the previous Rule of Law Reports.

Type of information to be included:

Under each of the four pillars, the replies should include references to the following types of information:

A) Legislative developments

- Newly adopted legislation
- legislative drafts currently discussed in Parliament
- legislative plans envisaged by the Government

B) Policy developments

- Implementation and enforcement of legislation
- evaluations, impact assessment, surveys
- white papers/strategies/actions plans/consultation processes
- follow-up to reports/recommendations of Council of Europe bodies or other international organisations
- important administrative measures
- generalised practices

C) Developments related to the judiciary / independent authorities

- important case law by national courts
- important decision/opinions from independent bodies/authorities
- state of play on terms, nominations and expired mandates for high-level positions (e.g. Supreme Court, Constitutional Court, Council for the Judiciary, Prosecutor General, heads of independent authorities included in the scope of the request for input[2])

D) Any other relevant developments

- National authorities are free to add any further information, which they deem relevant; however, this should be short and to the point.

Where relevant, please also indicate whether the developments reported are linked to the implementation of reforms and investments under the national Recovery Resilience Plan. To simplify your answers to the questionnaire, if there are no developments, it is sufficient to indicate this and the information covered in the contributions for the previous Rule of Law Reports does not need not be repeated.

[2] Such as: media regulatory authorities and bodies, national human rights institutions, equality bodies, ombudsman institutions, supreme audit institutions and, where they exist, transparency authorities.

* I am giving my contribution as

- ☐ Academic/research institution
- ☐ Business association
- ☐ Civil society organisation/NGO
- ☐ International organisation
- ☐ Judicial association or network
- ☐ Media organisation or association
- ☐ Public authority or network of public authorities
- ☒ Other

If "Other", please specify

The accredited representative body of the independent referral Bar (barrister profession) in Ireland

* Organisation name

250 character(s) maximum

The Bar of Ireland

Main Areas of Work

- ☒ Justice System
- ☐ Anti-corruption
- ☐ Media Pluralism and Freedom
- ☐ Checks and Balances
- ☐ Other

Please insert an URL towards your organisation's main online presence or describe your organisation briefly:

500 character(s) maximum

<https://www.lawlibrary.ie/>

Transparency register number

Check if your organisation is in the transparency register. It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making

N/A

* Country of origin

Please indicate the country of origin of your organisation

- ☐ Austria
- ☐ Belgium
- ☐ Bulgaria
- ☐ Croatia
- ☐ Cyprus
- ☐ Czechia
- ☐ Denmark
- ☐ Estonia
- ☐ Finland
- ☐ France
- ☐ Germany
- ☐ Greece
- ☐ Hungary
- ☒ Ireland
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ Latvia
- ☐ Lithuania
- ☐ Luxembourg
- ☐ Malta
- ☐ Netherlands
- ☐ Poland
- ☐ Portugal
- ☐ Romania
- ☐ Slovak Republic
- ☐ Slovenia
- ☐ Spain
- ☐ Sweden
- ☐ Other - please specify

First name

Ciara

Surname

Murphy

Email Address of the organisation

ciaramurphy@lawlibrary.ie

* Publication of your contribution and privacy settings

You can choose whether you wish for your contribution to be published and whether you wish your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

- ☐ Anonymous - Only your type of respondent, country of origin and contribution will be published. Organisation name, URL, transparency register number, first name and surname given above will not be published. **To maintain anonymity, please refrain from mentioning the name of your organisation and any details from which your organisation can be identified in the rest of your contribution as we will not be able to guarantee anonymisation of these elements.**
- ☒ Public - Your personal details (name, organisation name, transparency register number, country of origin will be published with your contribution).
- ☐ No publication - Your contribution will not be published. Elements of your contribution may be referred to anonymously in documents produced by the Commission based on this consultation.

☒ I agree with the personal data protection provisions.

[Specific privacy statement targeted stakeholder consultation 2026 rule of law report.pdf](#)

Questions on horizontal developments

In this section, you are invited to provide information on general horizontal developments or trends, both positive and negative, covering all or several Member States. In particular, you could mention issues that are common to several Member States, as well as best practices identified in one Member State that could be replicated. Moreover, you could refer to your activities in the area of the four pillars and sub-topics (an overview of all sub-topics can be found below), and, if you represent a Network of national organisations, to the support you might have provided to one of your national members.

Overview topics for contribution

[List of topics for contribution.docx](#)

Please provide any relevant information on horizontal developments here

5000 character(s) maximum

The Council of The Bar of Ireland is the accredited representative body of the independent referral Bar in Ireland, which consists of members of the Law Library and has a current membership of approximately 2,150 practising barristers. The Council has prepared these submissions at the request of the European Commission which is in the process of preparing the 2026 Annual Report on the Rule of Law. As the representative body of the barrister profession in Ireland, this submission will focus on the areas that relate to the scope of the expertise of our members (the Justice System).

With regard to general horizontal developments since the Council's last submission, the following developments are of note:

Accelerating Infrastructure Report and Action Plan

In December 2025, the Government published the Accelerating Infrastructure Report and Action Plan to help drive the efficient delivery of infrastructure across Ireland. It addresses 12 barriers to infrastructure development that have been identified. Thirty specific, time-bound measures have been designed to remove barriers. The Report outlines four pillars within which these reform actions fall:

1. Legal Reform
2. Regulatory Reform and Simplification
3. Co-ordination and Delivery Reform
4. Public Acceptance

The proposed legal reforms introduce a comprehensive, staged approach to strengthening the judicial review process for critical infrastructure projects. Key measures include enacting a Critical Infrastructure Bill and Emergency Powers legislation, implementing targeted legislative changes and modernizing environmental assessment frameworks. Additional actions focus on raising exemption thresholds, ensuring rapid responses to legal precedents and advancing civil reform legislation to streamline judicial review procedures. Collectively, these initiatives aim to enhance efficiency, reduce delays and provide a robust legal foundation for critical infrastructure delivery.

The Council broadly welcomed the publication and released a statement which can be read here <https://www.lawlibrary.ie/statement-on-the-publication-of-the-report-of-the-accelerating-infrastructure-report-and-action-plan/>.

The Council made a submission to the Consultation on the regulation of costs payable in matters prescribed on foot of section 294 of the Planning & Development Act 2024 (Scale of Fees). The Bar of Ireland is concerned that the proposed introduction of a rigid scale of fees and cost cap for environmental judicial reviews would seriously undermine access to justice, weaken environmental protection, and risk breaching constitutional, EU and international legal obligations.

The Bar of Ireland has warned that the proposed scale of costs would cap legal fees at well below the real cost of bringing complex planning and environmental judicial review cases noting that this would not deter unmeritorious litigants but would instead penalise people and environmental organisations raising legitimate concerns about unlawful decisions, by imposing on them the legal costs of fixing the errors of public bodies and State agencies.

Our submission highlights the Minister's statutory obligation to have regard to the need for equitable and orderly access to the courts for all and emphasises the importance of ensuring this principle is fully reflected in any final approach.

Key concerns raised in our submission include:

Interference with access to justice, by leaving successful applicants with substantial unrecoverable legal costs which will discourage meritorious legal challenges, by making them economically unviable.

The effective destruction of the "no foal, no fee"¹ model, which has been central to enabling public-interest environmental litigation in Ireland and on which the State has previously relied to demonstrate compliance with the Aarhus Convention².

A lack of legal or evidential basis for the proposal, including flawed assumptions about how judicial review proceedings operate, inaccurate comparators, and an over-reliance on the UK costs-cap regime – which has been found by the Aarhus Compliance Committee to be non-compliant with the Aarhus Convention, and is subject to a live investigation.

Perverse policy outcomes, including increasing the number of lay litigants which will place additional strain on court resources, and ultimately delay planning and environmental cases rather than expediting them.

Significant constitutional, EU and international law risks, including potential breaches of the right of access to the courts, potential breaches of competition law, the right to an effective remedy under EU law, and Ireland's obligations under the Aarhus Convention.

A link to our submission is available here:

<https://www.lawlibrary.ie/app/uploads/securepdfs/2026/01/Submission-to-DCEE-from-The-Bar-of-Ireland54.pdf>

(This answer is continued in the supporting document uploaded at the end of this submission)

Questions for contribution

Under each pillar, you are invited to provide information on measures taken to implement the recommendations addressed to the Member State in the 2025 Rule of Law report, as well as developments with regard to the points raised in the respective country chapter of the 2025 Rule of Law Report and any other significant developments since January 2025 and up to the date of submission^[3]. Please always include a link to and reference relevant legislation/documents (in the national language and/or where available, in English). **Significant developments** can include challenges, positive developments and best practices, covering both legislative developments or implementation and practices.

Information provided in reply to the first question under each pillar, related to the follow-up to the recommendations, does not need to be repeated in subsequent parts of the questionnaire, but can be cross-referenced in the subsequent questions, where relevant. All other questions are not limited to the recommendations, but as in previous years, cover the entire scope of the Report.

Member State/enlargement country covered in contribution [only one choice possible]

If you wish to submit information concerning several Member States/enlargement countries, please fill in the questionnaire separately for each country. There is no limit to the number of contributions submitted by a single participant.

- ☐ Albania
- ☐ Austria
- ☐ Belgium
- ☐ Bulgaria
- ☐ Croatia
- ☐ Cyprus
- ☐ Czechia
- ☐ Denmark
- ☐ Estonia
- ☐ Finland
- ☐ France
- ☐ Germany
- ☐ Greece
- ☐ Hungary
- ☒ Ireland
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ Latvia
- ☐ Lithuania
- ☐ Luxembourg
- ☐ Malta
- ☐ Montenegro
- ☐ Netherlands
- ☐ North Macedonia
- ☐ Poland
- ☐ Portugal

- Romania
- Serbia
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden

I. Justice System

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2025 Report regarding the justice system (if applicable)

5000 character(s) maximum

Civil Legal Aid reform

Reform of the Civil Legal Aid Scheme in Ireland remains a significant priority for the Council. The current Civil Legal Aid Scheme remains inflexible and hinders access to justice for society's most vulnerable. The Council stresses that reforming the Scheme should ensure broad applicability, eligibility and accessibility to safeguard the rights of the vulnerable and protect the maximum rights of citizens.

The reports on the review of the Civil Legal Aid scheme were finally published in July 2025. A majority and minority report were published, with 29 and 19 recommendations identified in the reports respectively by the Independent Review Group.

The Council intends to use the reports as the basis for engagement on the terms and conditions under which barristers provide services through the Civil Legal Aid scheme. In November, we hosted a conference in response to the reports, focusing on the future of the Scheme and the urgent need to restore civil fees for practitioners. The Council will be drafting an official position on these reports and hopes to appear at a hearing of the Joint Committee on Justice, Home Affairs & Migration in early 2026.

Criminal Legal Aid Fees

In recent years and as outlined in our previous Rule of Law Reports, the Government has acknowledged the work undertaken by criminal barristers and the value they bring to the administration of justice and application of the rule of law. During Budget 2024, then Minister for Justice Helen McEntee announced a reversal of the 10% cut that was uniquely applied to barristers in 2011. On 1 January 2025, an 8% increase in fees paid to barristers and solicitors under the Criminal Legal Aid Scheme came into effect (as announced in Budget 2025 on 1 October 2024). This represents an increase of €9 million in funding for criminal legal aid and is in addition to the 10% increase secured in Budget 2024.

In March 2025, representatives of the Council met with Minister for Justice Jim O'Callaghan to discuss the progress that has been made in restoring the fee cuts that were applied to the professional fees of criminal barristers while emphasising the ongoing frustration of members in relation to the failure to have the entirety of those cuts reversed, i.e. the 8% cut that was applied in March 2009 and the non-payment of the 2.5% increase that was due to be applied in September 2008.

Further, a General Meeting of members was held in January 2025, at which the Council narrowly avoided a demand from members to compel the Bar Council to recommend further withdrawals of service immediately

after the Easter break.

Ahead of the 2026 budget announcement, the Council requested the following:

Engage with your colleagues in Government to implement the commitment outlined in the Programme for Government (PFG), to 'fully restore criminal legal aid fees' during this year's budgetary cycle.

Specifically, to restore the 8% cut that was applied in March 2009 and the non-payment of the 2.5% increase that was due to be applied in September 2008 and fully restore the link with national wage agreements to ensure victims of crime and accused persons will have their rights vindicated in a timely manner.

As detailed in the Budget 2026 section in horizontal developments, €123 million (up €27 million) will be allocated to allow for the full restoration of Criminal Legal Aid fees in 2026, in conjunction with systemic reform of the criminal legal aid system.

Defamation Bill

Under the Defamation (Amendment) Bill 2024, it is proposed that juries in High Court defamation cases would be abolished and protective measures for those targeted by Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation proceedings (SLAPPs) would be introduced (where a plaintiff presents defamation proceedings against an individual or an organisation in order to silence responsible investigation or debate on matters of public interest).

The Council's key concern with the Bill surrounds the role of juries in defamation actions, and the primary argument for their removal, relates to their role in assessing damages. Historically, there have been instances where jury-awarded damages were more modest than what might have been awarded by a judge and it is now possible to guide juries with bands indicating appropriate damages in defamation cases. The Council emphasises the crucial role that juries play in society, providing a necessary balance to the judicial arm of the State. The provisions in the Bill as drafted, contradicts long-established jurisprudence that underscores the importance of public involvement in determining matters related to damage to reputation and free speech.

(This answer is continued in the supporting document uploaded at the end of this submission)

A. Independence

Appointment and selection of judges, prosecutors and court presidents (incl. judicial review)

(The reference to 'judges' concerns judges at all level and types of courts as well as judges at constitutional courts)

5000 character(s) maximum

Judges:

On January 1, 2025, the Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) was established (replacing the Judicial Appointments Advisory Board). This was the most substantial reform in the judicial appointment process in Ireland in almost thirty years. The JAC reviews applicants for all judicial vacancies and makes recommendations for the Government to consider.

The JAC has published a Selection Process Report for the period January - July 2025. It provides an overview of the processes of the JAC and insights from the first round of competitions, with a view to assisting applicants in future judicial selection processes. In total, they considered 221 applications, 617 references and conducted 37 interviews. The period between receipt of a ministerial request and the nomination of candidates varied between 8 and 12 weeks. In addition, the JAC prepared application forms and a detailed information booklet for the selection process for each Court. You can read the report here: [judicial-appointments-commission-selection-process-report-for-january-to-july-2025.pdf](#)

The Council noted in previous submissions to the Commission its concerns with the structure of the JAC and maintains that the Act is out of sync with European standards in that it does not include a requirement for a judicial majority to sit on the Commission. Further, the Council reiterates its concern that neither the Chair of the Council of the Bar of Ireland nor the President of the Law Society are included as members of the JAC, resulting in neither profession from which judicial appointments primarily emerge being represented. The inclusion of representatives of the legal professions on the Commission would provide a more complete picture of attributes of applicants that come before the JAC.

In Budget 2026, the budget of the JAC was increased by €300,000 to support work to increase judicial numbers further during 2026.

Prosecutors:

There is no change in respect of the appointment of prosecutors.

Irremovability of judges, including transfers, (incl. as part of judicial map reform), dismissal and retirement regime of judges, court presidents and prosecutors (incl. judicial review)

5000 character(s) maximum

Judges (including Court Presidents):

The retirement age for all judges remains unchanged at 70.

Prosecutors:

No change.

Promotion of judges and prosecutors (incl. judicial review)

5000 character(s) maximum

Judges:
No change.

Prosecutors:
No change.

Allocation of cases in courts

5000 character(s) maximum

No change

Independence (including composition and nomination and dismissal of its members), and powers of the body tasked with safeguarding the independence of the judiciary (e. g. Council for the Judiciary)

5000 character(s) maximum

No change

Accountability of judges and prosecutors, including disciplinary regime and bodies and ethical rules, judicial immunity and criminal/civil (where applicable) liability of judges (incl. judicial review)

5000 character(s) maximum

No change

Independence/autonomy of the prosecution service

5000 character(s) maximum

No change

Independence of the Bar (chamber/association of lawyers) and of lawyers

5000 character(s) maximum

The Bar of Ireland is the accredited representative body of the independent referral Bar in Ireland, which consists of members of the Law Library and has a current membership of approximately 2,150 practising barristers. The principles that barristers are independent, owe an overriding duty to the proper administration of justice and that the interests of their clients are defended fearlessly in accordance with ethical duties are at the heart of the independent referral bar.

An independent barrister is obliged to be free from any influence, especially such as may arise from their personal interests or external pressure, in the discharge of their professional duties. They must hold themselves out as willing and obliged to appear in court on behalf of any client on the instructions of a solicitor and to give legal advice and any other legal services to clients. They have an overriding duty to the court to ensure that the proper and efficient administration of justice is achieved, and they must not deceive or knowingly mislead the court. They must promote and protect fearlessly and by all proper and lawful means their client's best interests and do so without regard to their own interest or to any consequences for themselves or to any other person including fellow members of the legal profession; and, to perform their functions with due independence and in a manner which is consistent with their duty to participate in the administration of justice. This independence is necessary in non-contentious matters as well as litigation.

The introduction of Legal Partnerships introduced by the Legal Services Regulatory Authority (LSRA) in late 2024 could lead to conflicts of interest for practitioners who decide to practice under this new structure. Independent referral barristers traditionally operate independently, providing unbiased legal opinions and advocacy. Barristers who choose to practice under a Legal Partnership structure risk this independence, because of influences that may arise from the interests of the partnership. The independence of barristers is a cornerstone of the legal system in Ireland, ensuring that barristers can act without external pressures. As of October 2025, there have only been three Legal Partnerships registered with the LSRA, an increase of 2 on the year previous.

Significant developments capable of affecting the perception that the general public has of the independence of the judiciary

5000 character(s) maximum

In previous Rule of Law submissions, the Council referenced a Supreme Court case regarding the constitutionality of Personal Injuries Guidelines. The case, *Delaney v Personal Injuries Assessment Board & Ors* [2022] IEHC 321, was awaiting final decision from the Supreme Court in regards to an appeal. On April 9, 2024, the Supreme Court ruled that the Personal Injuries Guidelines, which were voted into force by the Judiciary, are legally binding and remain in effect. The court dismissed most of the issues raised in an appeal challenging the guidelines' constitutionality. However, it did find that a section of the 2019 Judicial Council Act, which relates to the judges' powers to make guidelines, was unconstitutional.

The Judicial Council's Personal Injuries Guidelines Committee completed a review of the guidelines and submitted draft amendments to the Board of the Judicial Council on 11 December 2024. Such amendments included an increase in the compensation award values for specific injuries to reflect inflation, changes to the "Use of Guidelines" section to incorporate recent judges from Superior Courts as examples of current legal standards and an amendment to clarify guidance on how to assess ward damages in cases involving multiple injuries. These amendments are currently under consideration.

On 4 February 2025, further to the meeting of the Judicial Council on 31 January, the draft amendments were submitted to the Minister for Justice.

B. Quality of justice

(Under this topic, you are not required to give statistical information but should provide input on the type of information outlined in the introduction)

[single market relevance] Accessibility of courts (e.g. court/legal fees, legal aid, language)

5000 character(s) maximum

Access to justice and the Courts remains a key priority for the Council and there is significant need for a comprehensive review of the civil legal aid system. As noted in the horizontal developments section above, our 'Justice on a knife edge' report addressed the strained provision of advocacy services. It can be read here https://www.lawlibrary.ie/app/uploads/securepdfs/2025/11/TBoI_CivilFeesReport-FINAL-Nov-2025.pdf. The restoration of Civil Legal Aid fees will continue to be an important priority for the Council as it has grave concerns about the scope and adequacy of the current system, noting that it is under-resourced and unable to meet the growing demand. Regarding professional fees for barristers under the civil legal aid scheme, a thorough review and update of the outdated 2012 terms and conditions is required in addition to the removal of cuts to barristers' civil fees applied during the FEMPI era.

In November 2025, the Minister for Justice noted the preliminary findings of the first survey examining the extent of legal need in Ireland. This was funded by the EU through the Technical Support Instrument and implemented by the OECD in collaboration with SG REFORM of the EU Commission. The survey was conducted as part of the project "Enhancing Access to Justice through People-Centred Justice", with 2,400 respondents. Ireland is participating in this project along with Italy, Malta and the Netherlands, which aims to strengthen the effectiveness, accessibility and fairness of justice systems. Among the preliminary results, it found that in Ireland, justice problems are more prevalent among certain groups including men (83%), people aged 18-24 (91%), people with higher levels of education (83%) and people with disabilities (88%). The most common types of justice problems experienced in Ireland were related to product issues (45%), services (40%), money and debt problems (35%) and problems with neighbours (33%). The preliminary results can be read here: <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-justice-home-affairs-and-migration/press-releases/minister-jim-o-callaghan-notes-the-early-findings-of-irelands-first-legal-needs-survey/>

Resources of the judiciary (human/financial/material), remuneration/bonuses/rewards for judges and prosecutors, including observed changes (significant and targeted increase or decrease over the past year)

(Material resources refer e.g. to court buildings and other facilities. Financial resources include salaries of staff in courts and prosecution offices.)

5000 character(s) maximum

Court Resourcing:

Ireland has the lowest number of judges per capita amongst the Council of Europe member states, which contributes to long waiting times for cases to be heard. The Bar of Ireland welcomed the publication of the Report of the Judicial Planning Working Group (JPWG) in February 2023, which emphasised the need for a substantial increase in judicial numbers and recommended appointing 44 additional judges in two phases across the Court of Appeal, High, Circuit, and District Courts. A first phase of 24 additional judges was approved and appointed throughout 2023. Specifically, this comprised eight extra judges for the District Court, eight for the Circuit Court, six for the High Court and two for the Court of Appeal. Following an impact

assessment of the first phase of appointments on court business, Government approval was secured, on 22 October 2024, for the implementation of the recommended second phase of another 20 extra judges (two for the Court of Appeal and six each for the High, Circuit and District Courts).

The Programme for Government states that the Government is committed to meet the growing demands on the justice system and ensure timely access to justice. In April 2025, Minister O'Callaghan stated he intended to introduce legislation to increase the number of judges by 20 in line with JPWG recommendations. This will see a further six judges appointed to each the District, Circuit and High Courts and two additional judges in the Court of Appeal. He also stated that the cross-organisational Implementation Steering Group (which includes representatives from the Department of Justice, the Courts Service, the Judicial Council and other stakeholders as well as a number of judicial observers) had met once so far in 2025 with the next meeting scheduled for early May, however it is unclear if the May meeting took place.

In Budget 2026, increased funding of €10.7 million was allocated for additional staff in the Courts Service to support the judiciary and the appointment of a second tranche of 20 additional judges in the course of 2026.

The JPWG report recommended that a review take place in 2025 to assess judicial needs up to 2028, to determine whether further increases in judicial numbers are necessary. Documents from the Department of Justice and the Courts Service reference ongoing judicial appointments and legislative changes, but not a review of the Working Group.

It is the Council's position that several issues in the Report will need to be carefully considered to evaluate their impact on access to justice and how our system continues to have the trust of the public:

- * Changes of Circuit or District Court Areas (specifically in the area of family and childcare) need to be viewed from a range of perspectives.
- * The importance of publicly accessible, in-person judicial services should not be underestimated. While the focus on efficiencies is important to the administration of justice, they should not arise at the cost of access to a vital public service.
- * Thirdly, the reforms underway through the implementation of the Kelly Report on the Review of the Administration of Civil Justice, Justice Plan 2022 as well as the important body of work in respect of a new Family Law System and the Review of the Civil Legal Aid System mean that dialogue between those groups, and practitioners operating at the coal face, is all the more important. It is noteworthy that the issue of legal aid, and the efficient operation the administration of justice is inextricably linked.

The proper resourcing of the Family Courts Act will dictate its success in the coming months and years. Although the increase in the number of judges is a positive development in resource expansion, the District Court is a Court of summary jurisdiction and is not set up to process complex cases such as financial relief applications in the context of judicial separation/divorce and cohabitation/civil partnership breakdown. The Council will be urging the next Government to delay the implementation of many aspects of the Act until a uniform and modern Courts infrastructure is established nationwide. This infrastructure should fully and properly meet the needs of litigants, their children, professional advisors, and the judiciary.

The Programme for Government committed to publishing implementation plan for a new Family Court system in 2025. In November 2025, Minister O'Callaghan stated that he intended to publish it in January 2026.

[single market relevance] Training of justice professionals (including judges, prosecutors, lawyers, court staff, clerks/trainees)

5000 character(s) maximum

As referenced in the horizontal developments section of this report, the LSRA published its implementation plan arising from the 'Breaking Down Barriers Reports' in late 2024. The Report includes 32 recommendations to address economic and other barriers facing aspiring and early career legal professionals and to increase diversity in the legal professions. The Council is engaging with the LSRA on the implementation plan. In April 2025, their Education and Training Committee was established. It will carry out preparatory work on implementing key recommendations made by the authority in its 2020 report, 'Setting Standards: Legal Practitioner Education and Training'. The Legal Practitioners Education and Training Committee (LPET Committee) will set and assure educational and training standards and accredit new and existing legal education and training providers. It is working towards completing its work programme within 15 months.

Separate from the recommendations of the LSRA, The Bar of Ireland continues to provide education and training opportunities for members under its Competency Framework for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) launched in October of 2021. The framework guides members in the identification and selection of CPD activities that are relevant to their professional learning needs.

The Judicial Studies Committee (<https://judicialcouncil.ie/judicial-studies-committee/>) was established in February 2020 pursuant to the Judicial Council Act 2019 and continues to oversee a modernised programme of judicial training and education on topics such as Judicial Conduct and Ethics, Avoiding Re-traumatisation, Unconscious Bias and Vulnerable Witnesses, Induction, Mentoring, Assisted Decision-Making and Training of Judicial Trainers. They remain committed to delivering high-quality judicial education and training. In 2025, they built on the success of existing initiatives while introducing innovative approaches to judicial education and training. Implementation of the 2023-2026 Action Plan is ongoing and guided by provided by the Training Survey, to adapt and enhance their programmes to meet the evolving needs of the judiciary. The Committee is committed to maintaining public trust in the judiciary and the administration of justice by delivering appropriate, effective and timely training. The training is based on the core values and principles set out in the Guidelines for the Judiciary on Conduct and Ethics, including independence, impartiality, integrity, propriety, equality, competence and diligence.

Digitalisation (e.g. use of digital technology, including electronic communication and AI tools, within the justice system and with court users, procedural rules, access to judgments online)

5000 character(s) maximum

As detailed in their 2024 Annual Report (published in September 2025), the Courts Service continued to make progress in technology and digitalisation, as part of the Courts Service Modernisation Programme, which aims to create a court system that is efficient, user-friendly and fit for purpose. They are currently in the second phase, Transform. Objectives for this phase include:

- * Implement digitally-enabled change - introduce new ways of working to enhance the customer experience and streamline operations
- * Transform day-to-day work with modern digital solutions
- * Engage with, and build capabilities of their workforce
- * Exchange information electronically internally and externally

Good progress was made, with 44 of 66 key outputs completed and 83% of planned work completed across Programme deliverables. A procurement process for a Transformation Partner for Optimise (phase 3) of the Modernisation Programme was completed.

In May 2025, the Civil Reform Team reviewed, improved and updated the information available on Small Claims on Courts.ie.

In September 2025, the Courts.ie website was upgraded to improve users' journey and to improve the courts.ie accessibility score with the National Disability Authority (NDA) and compliance with the EU Web Accessibility Directive.

In November 2025, the Courts Portal was expanded to enable the receipt of probate applications on a pilot basis, which includes working with a small number of solicitors to register them and support the filing of probate applications online. It will be deployed nationwide in time. A pilot for Circuit Court Family Law has is running in Dublin and will go live nationwide in the coming months. It is envisaged that the Portal will allow for e-filing, e-serving, making e-payments and the collection of digital orders across Civil and Family Law over the next few years.

The number of courtrooms equipped with video technology continues to increase year on year. There are now 165 technology enabled courtrooms nationwide, an increase of 29 from last year. 95% of charge sheets were processed electronically (120,957) in 2024 as per the most recent publicly available figures.

It was announced in May 2024 that the Supreme Court would undertake a project involving the recording and broadcasting of proceedings of the Court. This decision to broadcast aims to enhance access to court proceedings and to inform and educate the public in relation to cases heard before the Supreme Court, which are cases of public importance. The Opening of the Legal Year 2025 took place on 6th October 2025. In his opening speech, Chief Justice Donal O'Donnell announced that Supreme Court proceedings will now be recorded and made available on the Court's website, enhancing public access and understanding of proceedings.

Use of assessment tools and standards (e.g. ICT systems, including AI-based systems, for case management, court statistics and their transparency, monitoring, evaluation, surveys among court users or legal professionals)

5000 character(s) maximum

As mentioned above, the Courts Service continued to progress through the Courts Service Modernisation Programme. They are currently in the second phase and 44 of 66 key outputs completed and 83% of planned work has been completed across Programme deliverables

In 2025, the Courts Service introduced a new internal case-management system to the Supreme Court. The Unified Case Management System (UCMS) began operating in the Supreme Court on 28 October 2025. It is an important milestone in the three-year digital strategy and a significant step forward in its modernisation programme as it replaces outdated legacy platforms. The Courts Service says UCMS offers faster, more seamless case-processing, along with enhanced data quality and strengthened security.

Geographical distribution and number of courts/jurisdictions (“judicial map”) and their specialisation, in particular specific courts or chambers within courts to deal with fraud and corruption cases.

5000 character(s) maximum

In the Programme for Government, no specific commitments were made to fraud or corruption in relation to the courts or justice system.

Commitments that were made included:

- * “Establish a dedicated division of the High Court to handle all immigration cases”. This remains a future commitment. As of December, no dedicated immigration division has been officially established.
- * “Prioritise the introduction of a court supervised mediation-based process for managing neonatal brain injury medical negligence cases”. In April 2025, the High Court introduced new practice directions for clinical negligence proceedings, which include stronger powers for judges to direct parties to consider mediation and a requirement to confirm whether mediation has been offered when seeking a trial date. These changes apply to all clinical negligence cases and aim to encourage earlier settlement. As of December 2025, no fully operational or dedicated neonatal brain injury mediation process has been launched and details on when or how the specific court-supervised neonatal mediation scheme will be implemented have not been published.

On 28 April 2025, the Supreme Court sat to hear an appeal in Letterkenny Courthouse, County Donegal, which was its first sitting in the Northwest and the fifth sitting outside of Dublin since the initiative began in 2015. The Court’s sitting in Letterkenny reflects the fact that the Court hears cases of importance to everyone in the State and it is therefore appropriate for the Court to sit in locations around Ireland occasionally. The Supreme Court first sat outside of Dublin ten years ago when it heard cases in Co. Cork in 2015, followed by Co. Limerick in 2018, Co. Galway in 2019 and Co. Waterford in 2020, before the practice was interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

[single market relevance] Specialisation (of judges/specific courts/chambers within courts) and training for the judiciary to deal with commercial cases, as well as alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and mediation as regards commercial cases.

5000 character(s) maximum

Commercial cases

The Commercial Court is a dedicated division of the High Court which deals solely with significant commercial disputes. It deals with all types of business dispute including breach of contract, tort, property, trust and probate, IT disputes, judicial review, corporate mergers, global restructuring, insurance portfolio transfers, International Swaps and Derivatives or other investment disputes, and intellectual property disputes.

Proceedings dealt with by the Commercial Court must have a commercial dimension and generally must have a value of not less than €1m.

The Judicial Studies Committee (established under the Judicial Council Act 2019) oversees ongoing, judge-led education in areas including judgecraft, ethics, human rights, and digital skills. There is no specific training module aimed exclusively at commercial law judges.

ADR

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) has in recent years become an increasingly prominent mechanism for resolving disputes over traditional court litigation, due to its speed, cost-effectiveness and efficiency. As such, it is increasingly occupying a greater proportion of the work and practice of legal professionals. ADR and mediation are actively integrated into commercial case resolution, supported by court practice directions, professional guidance, and extensive mediation training for legal professionals.

The Bar of Ireland published an updated ADR guide in February, entitled 'The State of ADR in 2025', which gives insights into the Irish Alternative Dispute Resolution Landscape. The Arbitration and ADR committee organised the inaugural State of ADR Survey to gain insights from ADR practitioners into recent developments, trends and opinions and to better understand the current shape of ADR as a practice area. The survey sought to get a sense of what dispute resolution mechanisms were most commonly used amongst those with an ADR practice. 85.5% of survey respondents indicated that they had practiced in mediation in the last 12 months. The majority of respondents indicated that they practiced in more than one area of ADR in the last 12 months.

The report can be accessed here: https://www.lawlibrary.ie/app/uploads/securepdfs/2025/05/State_of_ADR_in_2025_Final_2-1.pdf

C. Efficiency of the justice system

(Under this topic, you are not required to give statistical information but should provide input on the type of information outlined in the introduction)

[single market relevance] Developments related to efforts to improve the efficiency of the justice system (e.g. as regards length of proceedings, to address backlogs)

5000 character(s) maximum

Civil Reform Bill

In January 2026, the General Scheme of the Civil Reform Bill was published. The legislation seeks to increase in the monetary jurisdiction limits of both the Circuit Court and the District. The monetary jurisdiction of the District Court will increase from €15,000 to €20,000 while in the Circuit Court it will increase from €75,000 to €100,000.

This is the first increase to the District Court since 2013, when it was increased to €15,000 in a bid to lower costs and speed up justice so more cases could be heard before the District Court instead of the Circuit Court.

The legislation also deals with the matter of judicial review cases, which government says is holding up key infrastructure and housing projects. The Civil Reform Bill seeks to address these challenges by putting a public interest or common good test at the centre of the process, while continuing to safeguard the right of citizens to challenge unlawful decisions of public bodies

Length of court proceedings

The median length of proceedings across various courts using data provided by the Courts Service Annual Report 2024 are set out below. With the introduction of new systems and better data collection in the High Court, improved data on the length of proceedings is available and this data has been backdated to include both 2022 and 2023. The median number of days from issue to disposal includes weekends, bank holidays and holiday periods.

Civil Court

* From issue to proceedings in first instance courts, the number of days was 630 in 2024, a decrease from 796 in 2023.

Criminal Court

* Regarding District criminal cases, the average length in days has been divided into subcategories. The average length for summary cases was 360 days in 2024, down from 397 in 2023. Indictable dealt with summarily cases times were 403 in 2024, down from 441 days in 2023. Return for trial cases were 127 days in 2024, down from 136 in 2023.

* Average length in days for the Circuit Court was 627 in 2024, compared to 622 days in 2023.

* The average length in days for the Central Criminal Court was 691 in 2024, which is a marked reduction from the 888 days in 2023.

* For the Special Criminal Court, the average length in days was 422 in 2024, an increase from the 386 days length in 2023.

Court of Appeal

* In the Civil Court of Appeal, the average length of proceedings from issue to disposal for new appeals was 53 weeks in 2024, a reduction from 59 weeks in 2023.

* For the Criminal Court of Appeal, the average length of proceedings from issue to disposal was 59 weeks in 2024, a slight improvement from 61 in 2023.

Supreme Court

The average length of proceedings in weeks from issue to disposal for the Supreme Court is as follows:

* Application for Leave Determined (from issue to determination date) was 16 weeks in 2024 and 17 weeks in 2023

* Application for Leave Determined (from papers being ready to determination) was 2.5 weeks in 2024, down from 4 in 2023

* Appeals (from grant of leave to case disposal) was 53 in 2024, an increase from the 47-week average in 2023.

Any other developments related to the justice system - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

Statement of Strategy 2025-2028

The Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration published its Statement of Strategy 2025-2028 in November 2025. The strategy can be viewed here: https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/8ecf7c48/Department_of_Justice_Home_Affairs_and_Migration_Strategy_Statement_2025-2028.pdf

Goal 3 of this strategy is An efficient justice system that is fair, effective and responsive to the needs of those seeking justice

The objectives of this goal are:

- *Dispute resolution systems including the Courts that are efficient and accessible for all those who need them
- *A family justice system that supports, safeguards and values the voices of children and families.
- *Reformed systems of criminal and civil legal aid that support access to justice
- *A Coroners service that provides compassionate and timely supports
- *Reformed defamation laws that balance freedom of expression with protections for individuals' good name and reputation
- *Greater efficiency in the interactions between criminal and civil justice agencies
- *Effective use of data to improve insights in relation to the functioning of the civil and criminal justice systems
- *Improve efficiency in the criminal justice system through focused review of the indictable offence process within the Circuit and Central Criminal Courts

The desired outcomes are:

- *Reduced waiting times for court hearings, and increased judicial numbers
- *Increased use of alternative dispute mechanisms
- *Vulnerable users can access services with the support and knowledge they need
- *Improved ability to coordinate and target resources and process cases across the justice sector
- *A unique identifier in place in the criminal justice system providing for greater research and statistics on how the system operates on an anonymised basis
- *Faster and more efficient prosecution of serious criminal offences, while maintaining integrity, respect and fairness at all stages of the process

2025 Rule of Law Report Recommendations

Arising from the recommendations contained in the 2025 Rule of Law Report regarding the justice system in Ireland, we wish to make the following observations:

The Council welcomed the observation that the level of perceived judicial independence in Ireland continues to be high among the general public and very high among companies.

It also welcomed the Commission's acknowledgement in its 2025 Country Chapter that there has been some further progress on the recommendation to reduce litigation costs. It appreciates the recognition that high levels of litigation costs can be explained by the unique aspects of Ireland as a common law jurisdiction, which provides additional context and consideration.

In previous years, The Bar of Ireland in conjunction with the Law Society made a detailed submission in response to the suggestion that legal costs in Ireland are high. Our submission undertook a detailed analysis of the various reports published over the past 20 years and demonstrated that the evidential basis for claims that Ireland is a high legal cost jurisdiction is very limited and that there are considerable questions to be raised on the assertion that Ireland is a high legal cost jurisdiction. An independent report was commissioned to conduct

an economic evaluation of options to control litigation costs and was submitted to the Department of Justice. This report provided further in-depth analysis of legal costs in Ireland. The view of The Bar of Ireland is that the most optimal manner to positively impact on legal costs is through a combination of four measures:

1. Increased investment in the justice system, in particular the number of judges and support staff, better case management and adoption of technology.
2. Investment in effective civil legal aid to ensure access to justice for all regardless of means.
3. The introduction of non-binding guidelines in respect of legal costs.
4. A reduction in state-imposed revenue on a Bill of Costs.

II. Anti-Corruption Framework

Where previous specific reports, published in the framework of the review under the UN Convention against Corruption, of GRECO, and of the OECD address the issues below, please make a reference to the points you wish to bring to the Commission's attention in these documents, indicating any relevant updates, changes or measures introduced that have occurred since these documents were published.

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2025 Report regarding the anti-corruption framework (if applicable):

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

A. The institutional framework capacity to fight against corruption (prevention and investigation / prosecution)

List any **changes** as regards relevant authorities (e.g. national agencies, bodies) in charge of prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of corruption and the resources allocated to each of these authorities (the human, financial, legal, and technical/specialised resources as relevant), including the cooperation among domestic and with foreign authorities. Indicate any relevant measures taken to effectively and timely cooperate with OLAF and EPPO

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Safeguards for the functional independence of the authorities tasked with the prevention and detection of corruption

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Information on the implementation of measures foreseen in the strategic anti-corruption framework (if applicable). If available, please provide relevant objectives and indicators

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

B. Prevention

Measures to enhance integrity in the public sector in particular as regards high-level officials (including as regards incompatibility rules, revolving doors, codes of conduct, ethics)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Measures to enhance general transparency of public decision-making (including rules on lobbying, asset and interest disclosure rules, gifts policy, transparency of political party, financing)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Measures to prevent conflicts of interest in the public sector. Please specify the features and scope of their application (e.g. categories of officials concerned, types of checks and corrective measures depending on the category of officials concerned)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

--> For the three previous points, **please also provide information and figures on their application/enforcement if available to you**, such as number of detected breaches/irregularities of the various rules in place and the follow-up given (investigations, sanctions, etc.)

Measures to ensure whistleblower protection and encourage reporting of corruption, including their application (i.e. number of reports received, and the follow-up given)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

[single market relevance] Specific measures to enhance transparency, integrity and accountability in sectors with high risks of corruption, with a view to monitor and prevent corruption and conflict of interests, and where applicable measures to prevent and address corruption committed by organised crime groups.

- *Such high-risk sectors could include: public procurement, including construction, transport/infrastructure, defence, cohesion, agriculture, environment, healthcare, investor residence schemes, large-scale investments of national interest and the spending of EU funds, urban planning.*
- *In particular, measures to mitigate high risks of corruption in the area of public procurement, such as enhancing transparency and oversight (for example through digital technologies) and promoting fair competition and accountability in public procurement (e.g. targeted actions to address the high share of single bids) and measures to guarantee the effective and independent functioning of the public procurement review bodies.*

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

[single market relevance] Measures for the prevention of corruption in relation to the issuing of official permits (e.g. related to environment, energy, service provision and various types of construction)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

C. Repression

The legal framework on the criminalisation and sanctions for corruption and related offences, including foreign bribery

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Official data on the number of investigations, prosecutions, final judgments and the application of sanctions for corruption offences (differentiated by offence if possible).

Please indicate whether the cases: involve legal persons; are related to the implementation of EU or national funds; involve high level corruption. Please indicate which data is publicly available and how policy-making is informed by the data

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Potential obstacles identified in law or in practice to the investigation and prosecution of high-level and complex corruption cases (e.g. political immunity regulation, procedural rules, statute of limitations, cross-border cooperation, pardoning)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Information on effectiveness of criminal and non-criminal measures and of sanctions (e.g. recovery measures and administrative sanctions) on both public and private offenders

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Any other developments related to the anti-corruption framework - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

III. Media pluralism and media freedom

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2025 Report regarding media pluralism and media freedom (if applicable)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

A. Media authorities and bodies

(Cf. Article 30 of Directive 2018/1808)

Measures taken to ensure the independence, enforcement powers and adequacy of resources (financial, human and technical) of media regulatory authorities and bodies

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Conditions and procedures for the appointment and dismissal of the head / members of the collegiate body of media regulatory authorities and bodies

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Existence and functions of media councils or other self-regulatory bodies

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

B. Safeguards against government or political interference and transparency and concentration of media ownership

[single market relevance] Measures taken to ensure the fair and transparent allocation of state advertising

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Safeguards against state / political interference, in particular:

- safeguards to ensure editorial independence of media (private and public)
- specific safeguards for the independence of heads of management and members of the governing boards of public service media (e.g. related to appointment, dismissal), safeguards for their financial and operational independence (e.g. related to reporting obligations and the allocation of resources) and safeguards for plurality of information and opinions
- **[single market relevance]** information on specific legal provisions and procedures applying to media service providers, including as regards granting

/renewal/termination of licenses, company operation, capital entry requirements, concentration and corporate governance

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

[single market relevance] Transparency of media ownership and public availability of media ownership information, including on direct, indirect and beneficial owners

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

C. Framework for journalists' protection, transparency and access to documents

Rules and practices guaranteeing journalists' independence and safety, including as regards protection of journalistic sources and communications, referring also, if applicable, to follow-up given to alerts lodged with the Council of Europe's Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Law enforcement capacity, including during protests and demonstrations, to ensure journalists' safety and to investigate attacks on journalists

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Access to information and public documents by public at large and journalists (incl. transparency authorities where they exist, procedures, costs/fees, timeframes, administrative/judicial review of decisions, execution of decisions by public authorities, possible obstacles related to the classification of information)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Lawsuits (incl. SLAPPs - strategic lawsuits against public participation) and convictions against journalists (incl. defamation cases) and measures taken to safeguard against manifestly unfounded and abusive lawsuits

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Any other developments related to media pluralism and freedom - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

IV. Other institutional issues related to checks and balances

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2025 Report regarding the system of checks and balances (if applicable)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

A. The process for preparing, enacting and implementing laws

[single market relevance] Framework, policy and use of impact assessments and evidence based policy-making, stakeholders'*/public consultations (including rules and practices on the transparent participation of civil society to policy development and decision-making processes), and transparency and quality of the legislative process in the preparatory, the parliamentary and implementation phase (including guidance on how to implement legislation)

** This includes also the consultation of social partners*

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

[single market relevance] Rules and use of fast-track procedures and emergency procedures (for example, the percentage of decisions adopted through emergency /urgent procedure compared to the total number of adopted decisions)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

[single market relevance] Safeguards to ensure legal certainty, the stability of the legal framework and non-discrimination.

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Rules and application of states of emergency (or analogous regimes), including judicial review and parliamentary oversight

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Regime for constitutional review of laws

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

B. Independent authorities

Independence, resources, capacity and powers (including effective access to relevant data) of national human rights institutions ('NHRIs'), of ombudsman institutions if different from NHRIs, of equality bodies if different from NHRIs and of supreme audit institutions

(Cf. the website of the European Court of Auditors: <https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/Pages/SupremeAuditInstitutions.aspx#>)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Statistics/reports concerning the follow-up to recommendations by National Human Rights Institutions, ombudsman institutions, equality bodies and supreme audit institutions in the past year

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

[single market relevance] Safeguards to ensure the effective independence of supervisory and regulatory authorities with a direct impact on economic operators such as national economic oversight, enforcement and competition authorities

N/A

C. Accessibility and judicial review of administrative decisions

[single market relevance] Transparency of administrative decisions and sanctions (incl. their publication and rules on collection of related data) and respect of the good administration principle (including the obligation of the administration to give reasons for decisions)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

[single market relevance] Judicial review of administrative decisions: short description of the general regime (in particular competent court, scope, suspensive effect, interim measures, and any applicable specific rules or derogations from the general regime of judicial review)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

[single market relevance] Safeguards (other than judicial review) regarding decisions or inaction of administrative authorities, including remedies (e.g. administrative review)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

[single market relevance] Rules and practices related to the application by all courts, including constitutional jurisdictions, of the preliminary ruling procedure (Art. 267 TFEU)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

[single market relevance] Implementation of final judgments by the public administration and State institutions and follow-up given to supranational judgments, including decisions from the European Court of Human Rights, as well as available remedies in case of non-implementation

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Oversight, including by courts, of the use of intrusive surveillance software by national authorities

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

D. The enabling framework for civil society

Measures regarding the framework for civil society organisations and human rights defenders (e.g. legal framework and its application in practice incl. registration, transparency and dissolution rules)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Rules and practices having an impact on the effective operation and safety of civil society organisations and human rights defenders. This includes measures to protect them from attacks – verbal, physical or on-line –, intimidation, legal threats incl. SLAPPs, negative narratives or smear campaigns, measures capable of affecting the public perception of civil society organisations, etc. It also includes measures to monitor threats or attacks and dedicated support services, as well as available remedies

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Organisation of financial support for civil society organisations and human rights defenders (e.g. framework to ensure access to funding, and for financial viability, taxation/incentive/donation systems, measures to ensure a fair distribution of funding)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

E. Initiatives to foster a rule of law culture

If there have been developments related to initiatives to foster a rule of law culture, please specify, which (e.g. debates in national parliaments on the rule of law, public information campaigns on rule of law issues, contributions from civil society, education initiatives, etc.)

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Any other developments related to the system of checks and balances - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Cross-pillar elements: cross-border rule of law issues related to the Single Market

If there are any significant challenges concerning the Single Market you have been facing in a cross-border context relating to any of the four pillars of the report, including for example issues with market access and the conditions for economic activities, that you would like to highlight, please do so here.

Given the cross-cutting nature of this question, it is included as a separate section in the questionnaire. Information collected under this question will however be integrated under the relevant existing pillar(s) of the Report.

5000 character(s) maximum

N/A

Supporting document upload

If you would like to submit any supporting document(s) to your contribution, please upload your file(s) here

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/The_Bar_of_Ireland_supporting_doc_2026_ROL_continuation_of_answers_.pdf

Contact

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