

Targeted European Commission consultation of justice practitioners and judicial training providers on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights for the 2025 Charter report

Summary of survey results

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Unit C.2 — Fundamental rights policy and free movement

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Executive summary

The survey was carried out among two groups: justice practitioners (JPs) and professional JP organisations.

The survey showed that training on the Charter does not play a large role in education of JPs, mandatory training being the exception. Usage of dedicated tools on the Charter is also not common, with the majority of JPs not using any tools in their work. Most JPs expressed a desire for more supportive tools, with databases on Charter-relevant case law being the most frequently requested item. On the other hand, most professional JP organisations use Charter-related tools and are content with the training opportunities provided, though only a minority feels their members are sufficiently educated on the Charter.

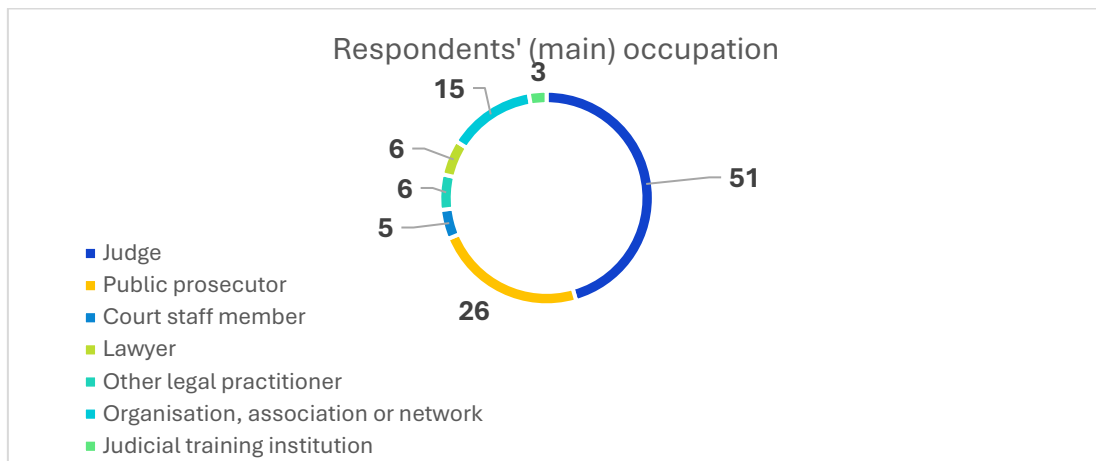
Key takeaways and learning points

- Only 29% of JPs have ever participated in an in-person training on the Charter, 93% of whom did so voluntarily. A similar trend can be observed for online-training, with 21% JPs having participated in it.
- Lack of information is significant: 54% of JPs that did not partake in any training said they did so because they were not aware of this option, only 5% said they did not find the Charter relevant for their tasks.
- This is further illustrated by tool usage: 59% of JPs did not use any tools for information on the Charter; the most popular tools were the FRA/Council of Europe thematic handbooks on the Charter and the ECHR (used by 19%), the Charter tutorial on the e-Justice portal (16%) and the FRA Charter handbooks (14%).
- 43% of JPs thought available training opportunities in their Member States were sufficient (strongly agree or somewhat agree). 66% and 68% respectively thought so about opportunities abroad and online.
- JPs expressed their desire for supportive tools regarding the CJEU's interpretation of the Charter, with 71% wishing for databases on Charter-relevant case-law and 67% for fact sheets on the interpretation of individual Charter provisions by the CJEU. Exchange of best practices on the Charter's application with other justice practitioners was the third-most popular answer (60%).
- Enhancing training opportunities and providing and improving databases on Charter issues and relevant case-law were other frequent replies of JPs when asked about what steps the Commission and Member States should take.
- Regarding Charter knowledge among JPs, 41% claim to know enough about the Charter's conditions of applicability and 46% claim to know enough about its substance. 20% claim to never use it in their legal work.
- Regarding the surveyed organisations, only 39% provided in-person training and 33% provided online training.

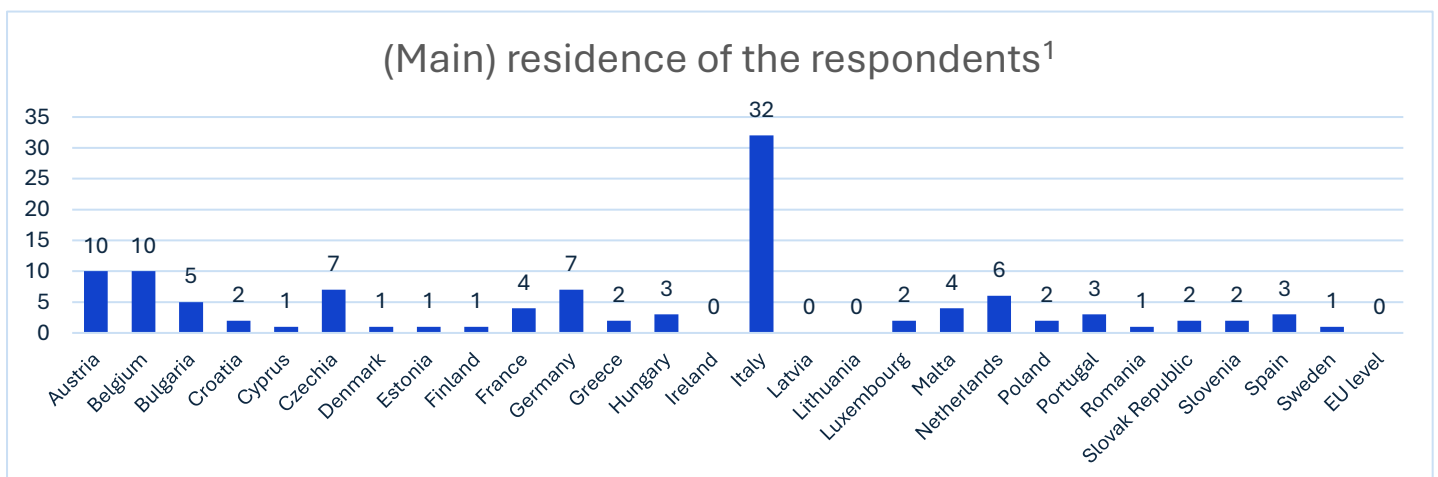
- Usage of Charter-related tools was widespread in JP organisations, with the FRA Charter handbook being the most popular one (56%), followed by the FRA/Council of Europe thematic handbooks on Charter and ECHR (44%) and the Charter tutorial on the e-Justice portal (28%).
- 61% of JP organisations view the availability of training opportunities on the national level as sufficient (strongly or somewhat agree); they are even more content with opportunities on the EU/international level (89%) and online (83%).
- Only 33% of organisations feel that their members or participants have enough knowledge on the conditions of applicability as well as the substantive provisions of the Charter. 6% claim their members or participants never use the Charter in their work.

Summary of the responses provided

Respondents



The majority of respondents to this consultation were judges (51; 54%) and public prosecutors (26; 28%).



The majority of respondents work within their own Member States, on the national level (46%) or on the regional or local level (19%). Only 35% of the respondents work at a supranational level: 18% at the EU level and 17% at the international one.

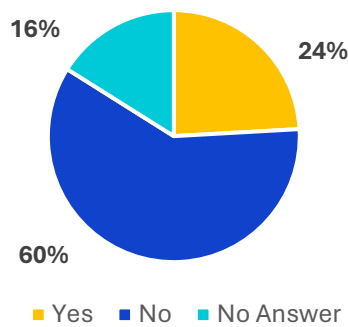
A. Judicial practitioners (JPs)

The first strand of the consultation concerned JPs.

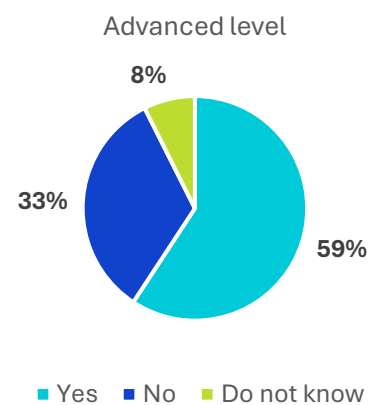
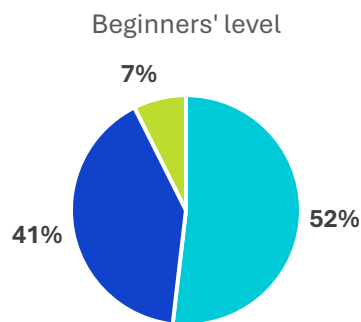
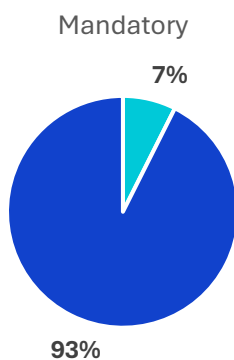
Participation in Charter trainings

The majority of JPs have not participated in an in-person training on the Charter (60%). The types of training in which the respondents took part in varied (see the graph below).

Participation in in-person training on the Charter



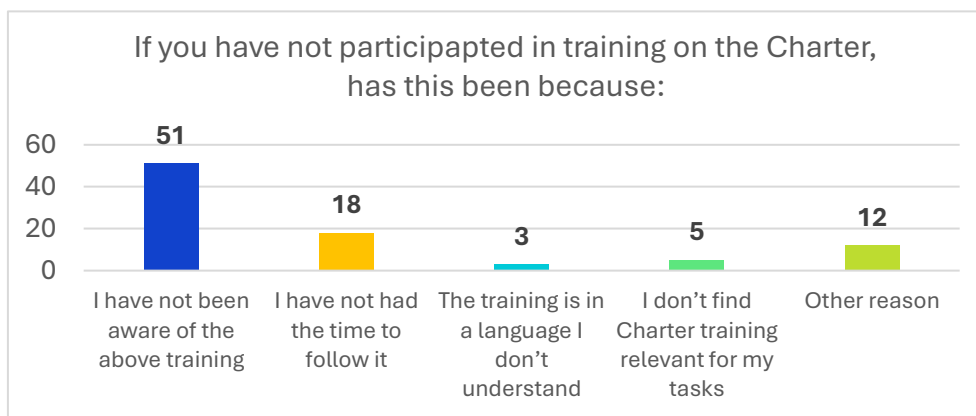
Type of training



The majority of respondents have not participated in online trainings on the Charter (79%). The most popular online training among respondents was the European Judicial Training Network's seminars and webinars on fundamental rights.

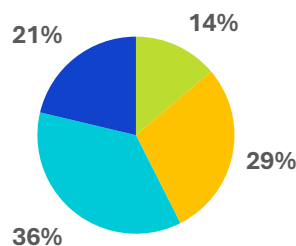


Lack of awareness about training opportunities is the main cause for the non-participation in training on the Charter (51; 54%). No clarification was provided on the other reasons why respondents did not participate (12; 13%).

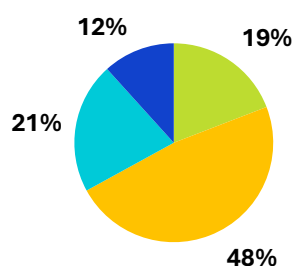


Are the available opportunities for training on the Charter sufficient?

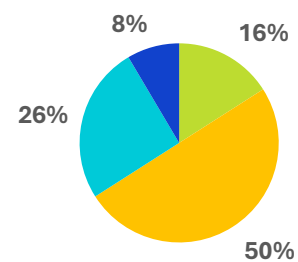
In your Member State



Online



Abroad

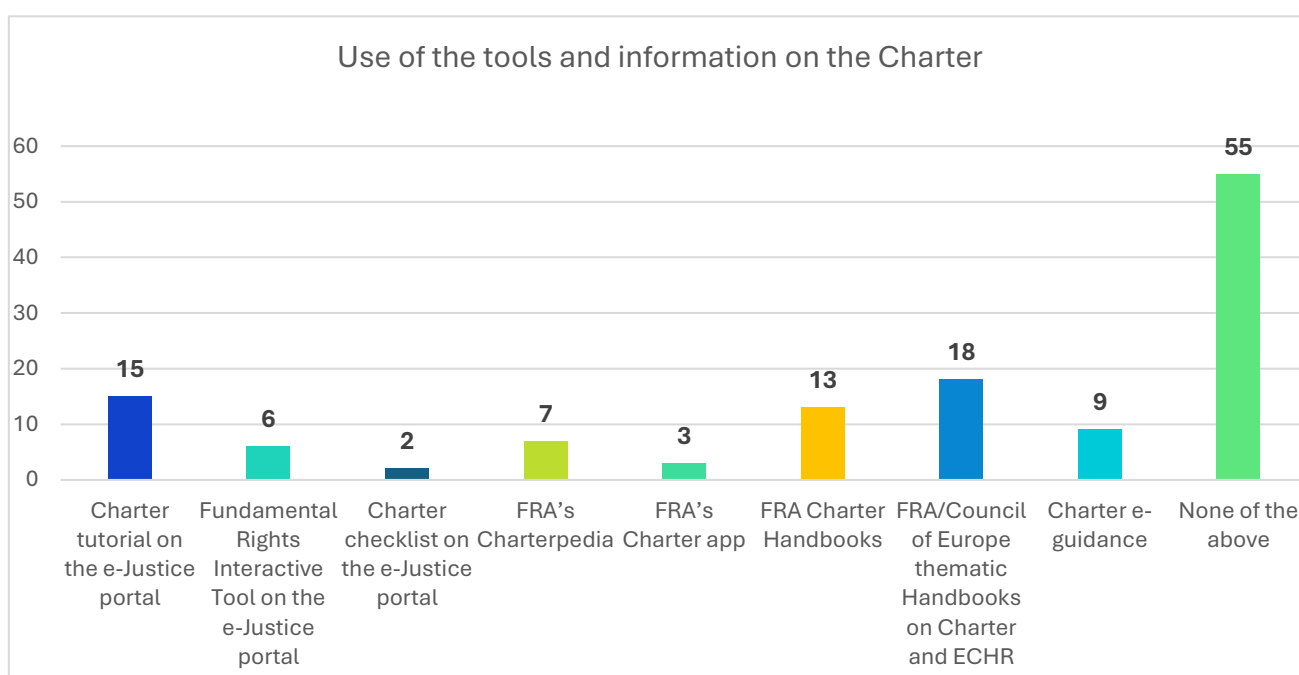


■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree
■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree

Respondents find the available opportunities for training insufficient in their own Member State (57%) but sufficient online (67%) and abroad (66%). The majority of respondents would prefer a training offered in their national language (58%).

Use of online tools and information on the Charter

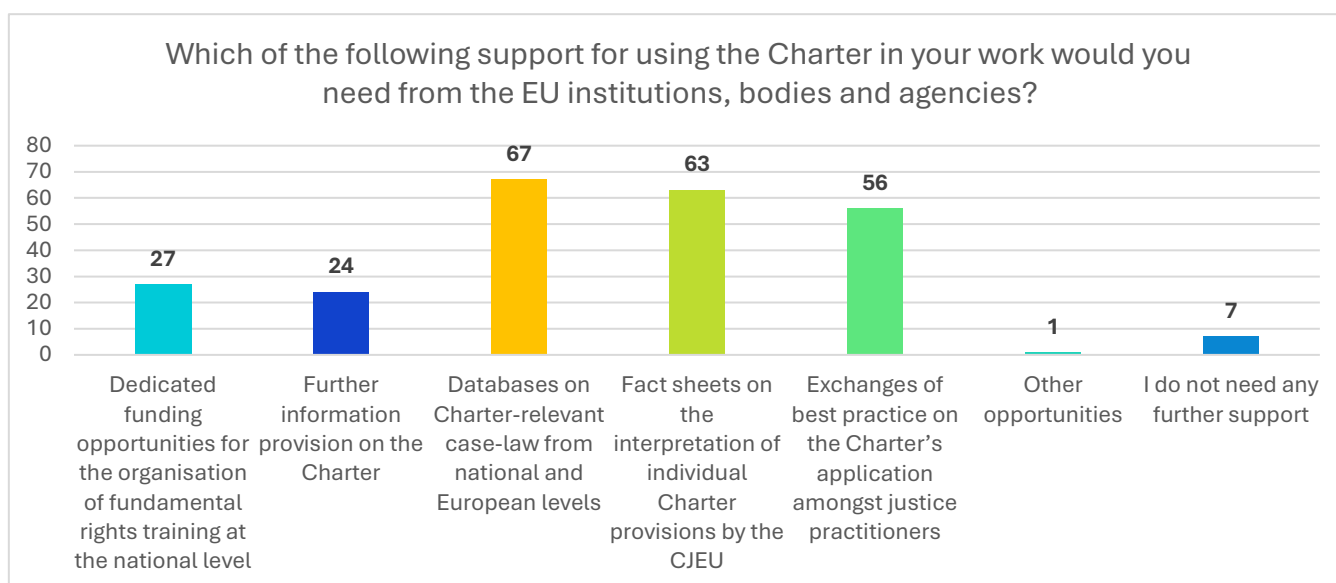
The three most used tools and information on the Charter were [the FRA/Council of Europe thematic handbooks on Charter and the ECHR](#) (18), [the Charter tutorial on the e-Justice portal](#) (15) and the [FRA Charter handbooks](#) (13). 55 respondents have used none of the below-mentioned tools and information on the Charter.



The majority of respondents (82% have not participated in good practice exchange on the use of the Charter.

Respondents indicated they need support from the EU institutions, bodies and agencies for using the Charter in their work and would benefit from databases on Charter-relevant case-law from national and European levels (67; 71%), fact sheets on the interpretation of individual Charter provisions by the CJEU (63; 67%) and exchange of best practice on the Charter's application amongst JPs (56; 60%).

Other than training opportunities, respondents need additional support from their Member States for using the Charter in their work. Many expressed the need for comprehensive, accessible databases containing national and supranational case law relevant to the Charter, with functionalities that allow for efficient research and updates. (BG, IT, OT, AT, IT, ES, LU, DE, MT, FR). They also highlighted the need for clear national guidelines or protocols on applying the Charter. This includes materials that explain the relevance of the Charter in specific legal areas or provide practical examples and compatible template (MT, CZ, FR, HU, IT). Furthermore, there is a call for the translation of key Charter-related materials into national languages and ensuring these resources are widely disseminated and accessible to all legal professionals, regardless of language proficiency (MT, HU, PT, IT, AT). Finally, many respondents expressed a desire for enhanced networking opportunities at the national level to facilitate cooperation and knowledge exchanges among legal (CZ, EL, BG, IT, EE, HR). There was also a call for dedicated funding opportunities for NGOs on the implementation of the Charter (BG) and for greater financial support for additional seminars and trainings (CZ).



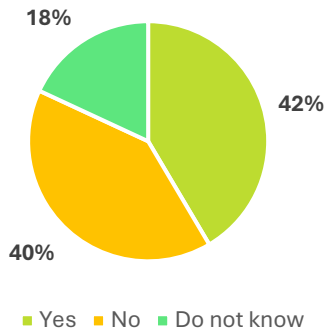
Knowledge and use of the Charter

Almost half of the respondents consider they have enough knowledge about the conditions for the applicability of the Charter (42%) and on the substance of individual Charter provisions (46%).

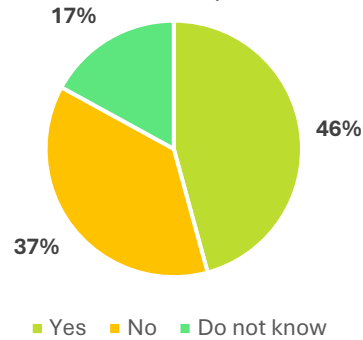
Half of the respondents use, at least sometimes, the Charter in their legal work (60; 50%). Nonetheless, a fifth of the respondents never use the Charter in their legal work (19; 20%).

Knowledge of the Charter: do you have enough knowledge...

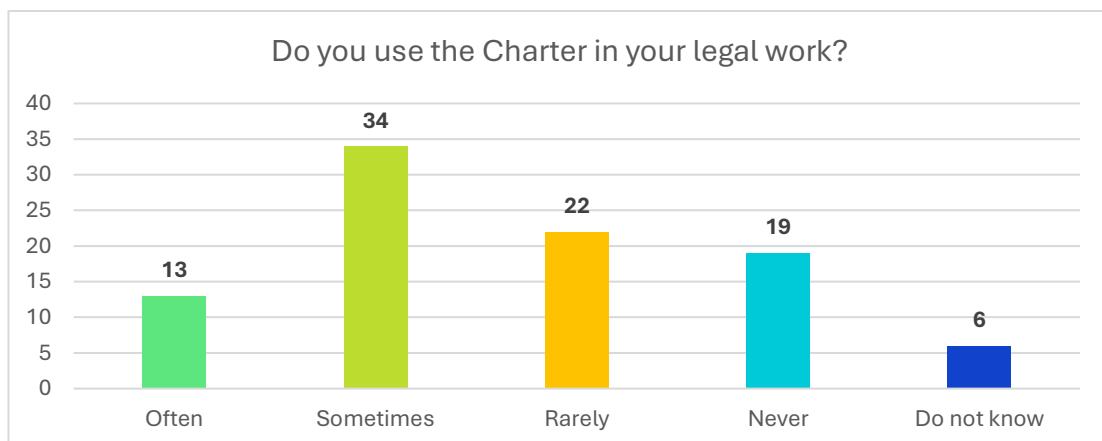
... about the conditions for the applicability of the Charter?



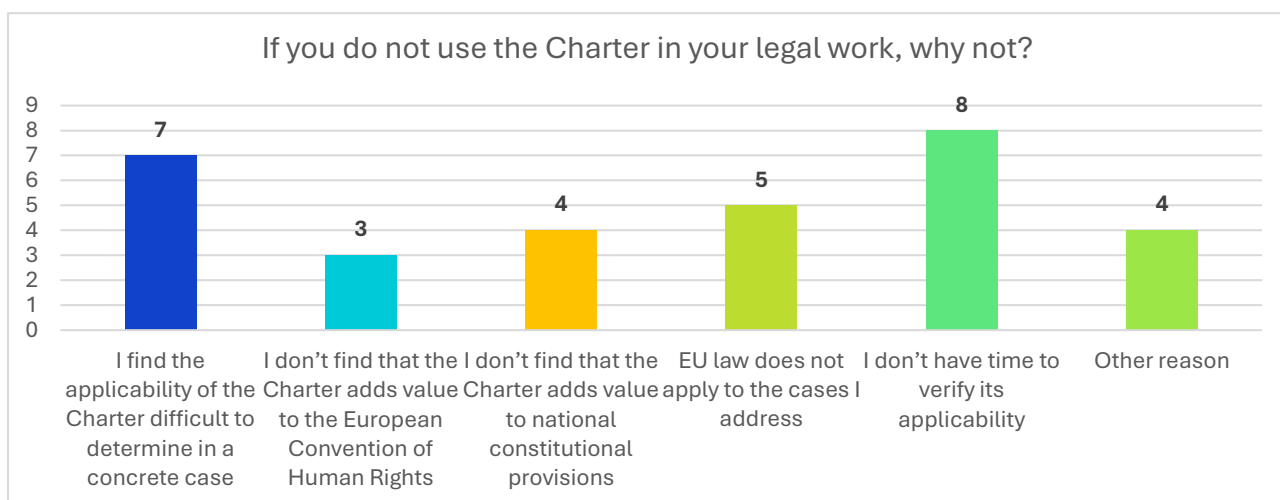
... on the substance of individual Charter provisions?



Most respondents use the Charter at least sometimes in their work (47), and the Charter is frequently used as an additional legal standard in judicial decision-making, providing guidance alongside national and EU law. It is particularly valuable for interpreting EU legislation, especially in relation to human rights and fundamental freedoms (PL, MT, EL, BG, HU, IT, SI, DE, ES). Referencing the Charter has influenced case outcomes, especially in areas like international protection, immigration, asylum law, cross-border cooperation, protection of minors, data protection, and cases involving procedural rights (AT, BE, HU, ES, FI, IT, SI, DE, CZ, NL, CY, FR). The Charter is also mentioned as a tool in training and educating legal professionals, NGOs, and activists, indicating its value in broader legal education and awareness (HU, FR, BG).



Respondents that do not use the Charter in their legal work do not have the time to verify its applicability (8) or find the applicability difficult to determine in a concrete case (7).



Annual Charter Report

More than half of the respondents were not aware of the Charter reports of the European Commission (55%).

To make the reports more relevant for JPs, the respondents have provided a few suggestions. The reports should take into account that justice practitioners work in different legal systems and should be translated into national languages (IT). The reports could also include references to publications in the professional literature journals (DE). Suggestions for their advertisement and their dissemination, for instance by the judiciary or through their professional organisations, were also given (HU, FR, IT, AT, DE).

Further support

Respondents suggested measures the European Commission could take to assist them in effectively applying the Charter in their work. The most widely suggested measures concerned training and case law databases: respondents from 21 Member States emphasized the need for tailored and frequent training programs, including in national languages, alongside the creation of practical guidance tools like handbooks and case-law databases that are accessible and updated regularly (PL, SK, CY, MT, EL, BG, HU, PT, FR, IT, AT, IT, FI, HR, SK, LU, BE, CY, ES, EE). Suggestions were also given regarding better communication strategies and the encouragement of collaboration between national and European networks for sharing best practices (IT, BE, EE, HU, PT, ES, BG, CZ, NL). Increased funding would also assist respondents in their work (MT, EE, SI, BG).

Respondents gave similar suggestions for measures Member States could take to assist them. There was a strong emphasis on organizing more training sessions and workshops on the applicability of the Charter and ensuring that these opportunities are available regularly. Training was also suggested to be integrated into the continuous professional training of legal professionals. The

need for integrating the Charter’s application into the routine legal practice through judicial exchanges, support for civil society, and involvement of national judicial training institutions was highlighted (PL, CZ, MT, BG, HU, PT, DE, AT, IT, ES, FI, HR, CY, LU). Actions to increase the awareness and visibility of the Charter through effective communication strategies and organization of conferences and seminars were also suggested (EL, MT, MG, BE, IT, CY). Promoting cooperation between different sectors of the justice system and other related institutions and facilitation of dialogue and partnership between prosecutors, law enforcement, judiciary and academic institutions was deemed important (MT, SK, HU, CZ).

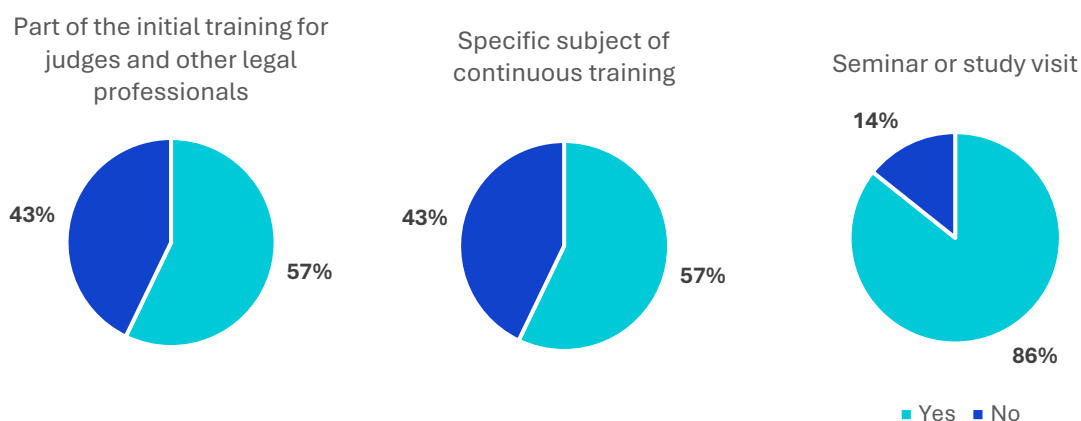
B. Professional JP organisations

This second part analyses the responses of the 15 organisations, associations, network and judicial training institutions that have responded to the second strand of the questionnaire. ⁽¹⁾

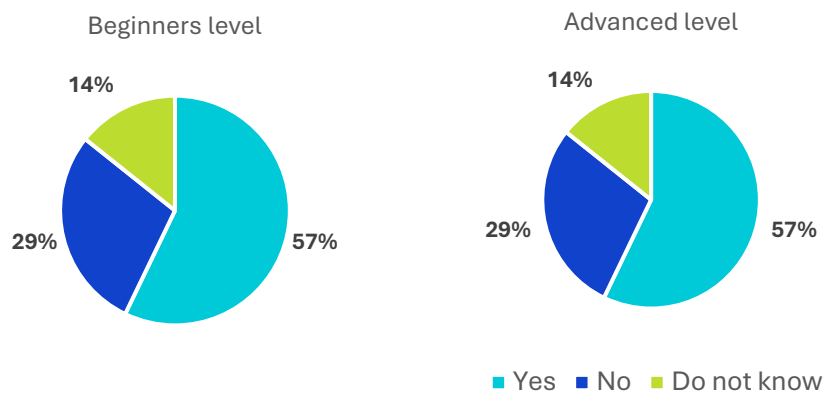
Organisation of Charter training

41% of the responding organisations organised in-person training on the Charter, all of which is part of continuous training on various topics of EU law. The majority of the organised training is part of the initial training for judges and other legal professionals (57%), is a specific subject of continuous training (57%) and takes the form of a seminar or study visit (86%). Training is available at beginners level (57%) and advanced level (57%).

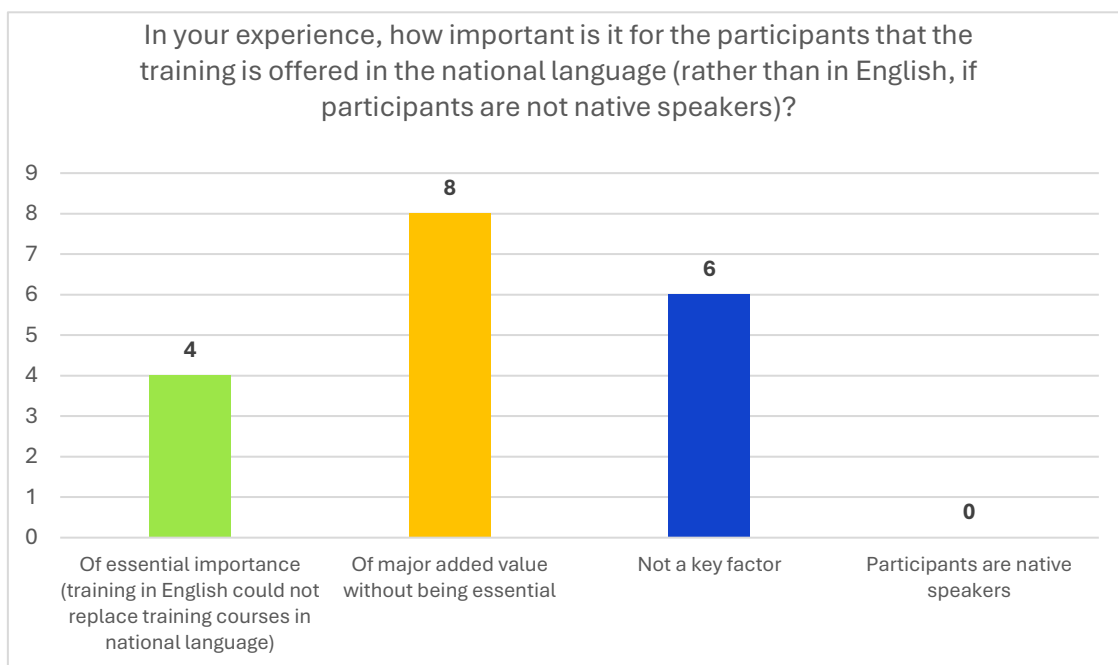
Type of training



⁽¹⁾ 2 are based in Austria, 5 in Belgium, 1 in Czechia, 1 in France, 1 in Germany, 2 in Malta, 3 in the Netherlands, 1 in Romania, 1 in Slovenia and 1 in Spain. 7 of them have indicated to be working at the international level, 11 at the EU level and 9 at the national level.



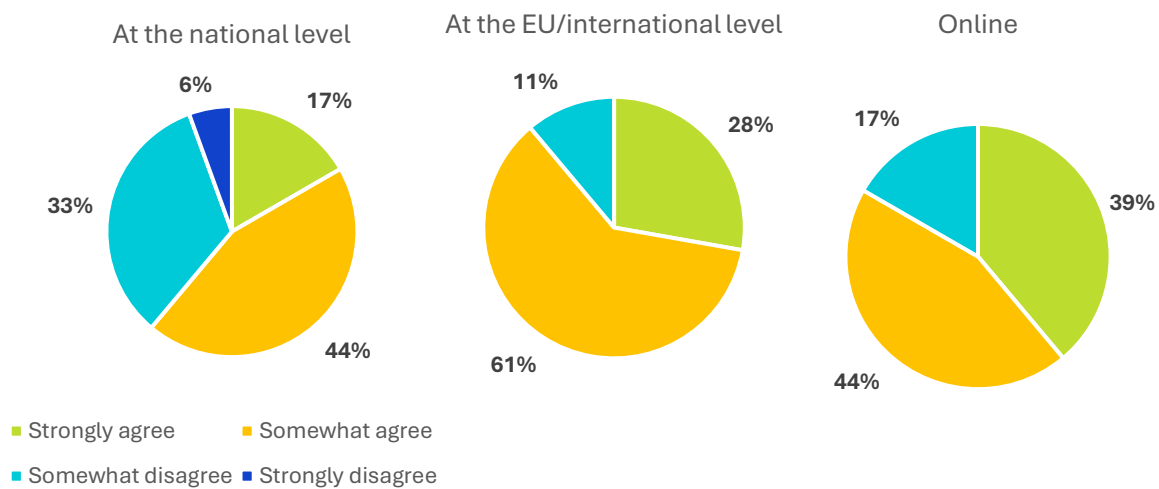
33% of the responding organisations organise online training on the Charter. These consists of both informal and formal online meetings or webinars. Some organisations also organise annual conferences that address questions pertaining to the Charter.



Two third of the responding organisations believe that it is important for the participant that the training is offered in the national language (rather than in English, if participants are not native speakers).

A third of the responding organisations (66,66%) consider that including training on the Charter in their training offer on EU law could further contribute to the increased use of the Charter. This training could be included across various legal domains, as Charter training is seen as relevant across multiple areas of EU law, including criminal law, civil law, administrative law, and particularly in fields related to human and fundamental rights. Certain topics frequently mentioned as being particularly suited for Charter training included fundamental rights and criminal justice, asylum and migration law, data protection and privacy rights, non-discrimination law, digital technology and AI.

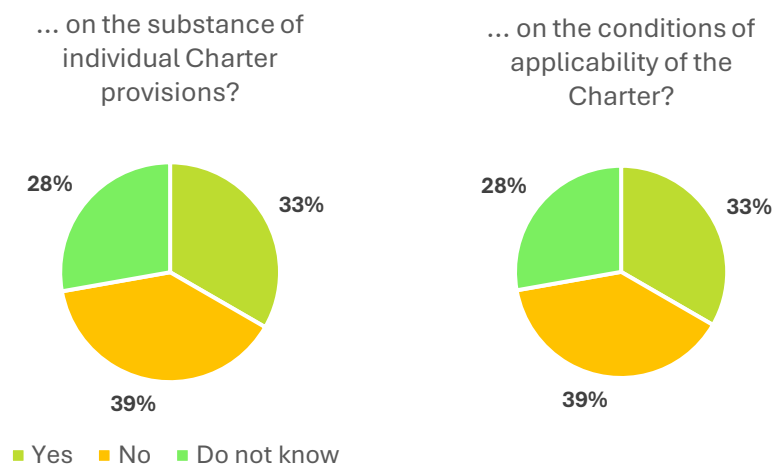
In your experience, are the available opportunities for training on the Charter sufficient?



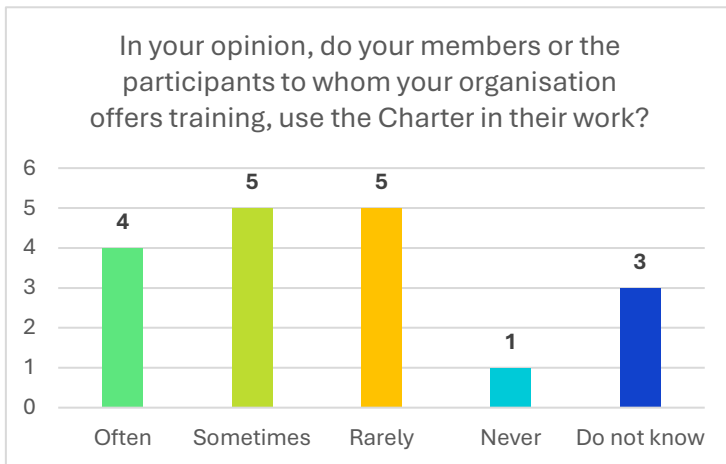
Most of the responding organisation agree that the available training opportunities on the Charter are sufficient at the national level (61%), at the EU/international level (89%) and at the online level (83%).

Knowledge and use of the Charter

In your opinion, do your members or the participants to whom your organization offers training have enough knowledge...



Only a third (33%) of the responding organisations believe that their members or the participants to whom they offer training have enough knowledge on the conditions of applicability of the Charter and on the substance of individual Charter provisions.

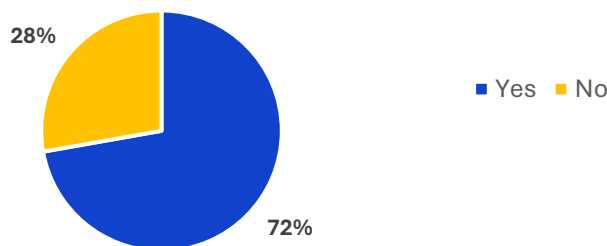


Half of the responding organisations are of the opinion that their members or the participants to whom they offer training use the Charter in their work (9; 50%).

In the responding organisations' experience, the Charter brings an added value. It provides a common legal and ethical framework that supports the work of justice practitioners across Member States and reinforcing rights. ⁽²⁾ The Charter also serves as a practical reference in training sessions and legal proceedings, particularly in areas such as fair trial rights, detention conditions and asylum procedures. In addition, participants in training activities gain increased confidence in using Charter-based arguments in national and EU-level cases. In the view of the responding organisations, the training participants mostly do not apply the Charter for lack of awareness and knowledge or perceived overlap with the ECHR.

Annual Charter reports

Are you aware of the Commission's Annual reports on the application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (Charter reports)?



The majority of the responding organisations (72%) are aware of the annual Charter reports. They consider that these reports could be made more relevant

⁽²⁾ More specifically, the right to fair trial (Article 47), detention conditions in relation to prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment (Article 4), asylum procedures (Articles 18 and 19), property rights (Article 17) and data protection (Article 8) were mentioned.

for their organisations and members including concrete case studies and judicial decisions where the Charter played a significant role, particularly at national or EU levels. This would provide practical insights directly applicable to the work of judge and prosecutors. Similarly, incorporating practice examples related to specific sectors, such as property rights, land registration, digital justice services and cross-border transactions could be useful. Reports could be further improved by offering clear summaries, visual materials, direct links to training resources or case-law databases, and by being made readily accessible, possibly through intranets or direct distributions to judiciary members. Ensuring that the reports are available in all official languages would improve their usability and keep awareness high among practitioners across the EU.

Further support

In the view of the responding organisations, the European Commission could take further measures to assist justice professionals in effectively applying the Charter. There is a strong call for the development of targeted training and practical, case-based tools, such as e-learning modules, judicial bench books and guides focused on Charter-based legal reasoning. These should be tailored to national contexts and specific fields. Responding organisations need further guidance on interpreting Charter rights. Improved cooperation mechanisms with EU bodies, such as FRA and DG JUST are desired for this purpose, as well as events where JPs may exchange best practices. Respondents have also mentioned the need for funding and financial support, including for additional training programs for judges and court staff, language training and regular updates of training materials and courses. Continued funding and support for cross-border judicial exchanges, peer learning, and communities of practice are also valued as ways to promote consistent application of the Charter. Another suggested measure included creating a centralized, user-friendly database linking Charter articles to relevant case law and ensuring easy access to translated case law where the Charter was applied.

The respondents are also of the view that Member States can take further measures to assist the effective application of the Charter, for instance through integrating Charter-based analysis into both initial and ongoing judicial training. This should also extend to interdisciplinary training involving lawyers, judges and law enforcement, with a focus on national context applications in the Member State's national language. The Charter should also be incorporated into the training curricula for new graduates and continuous professional development programs. Furthermore, ensuring national case law databases include references to the Charter can help legal professionals easily identify relevant precedents. Strengthening cooperation with EU initiatives and civil society, as well as promoting collaboration with academia, can help keep training materials up-to-date with evolving Charter jurisprudence.

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