



European Network of Councils
for the Judiciary (ENCJ)

Réseau européen des Conseils
de la Justice (RECJ)

Mr Justice Brian O'Moore Member of the ENCJ Executive Board



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Compilation replies to the ENCJ Questionnaire on Innovations within the judiciary

1. Does your Council/other similar body have an established a policy/framework to encourage innovation that contributes to the efficiency of justice within the judiciary? Are there any strategic objectives your Council/alternative governing body has identified to improve justice through innovation?
2. Are innovation initiatives under discussion at the Judicial Council/Ministry of Justice/NCA meetings?
3. Which do you consider to be the most valuable innovations of the judiciary that currently contribute to the efficiency of justice in your country? Please explain briefly.
4. What are the pressing needs of the legal professions (judiciary in particular, but not limited to) that in your opinion could be addressed through innovation? Are there any dangers or limitations of such innovations that you could foresee?
5. In your opinion, what challenges (if any) does the judiciary in your country face in relation to legal innovation?



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List of Countries

- Bulgaria
- Malta
- Croatia
- Spain
- Norway
- Slovenia
- Austria
- Sweden
- Germany
- The Netherlands
- Estonia
- Finland
- Denmark
- Slovakia
- France
- Portugal
- Lithuania



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1. Appetite for Innovation

2. Specific Innovations

3. ENCJ Award for Positive Change



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Appetite for Innovation



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Specific Innovations



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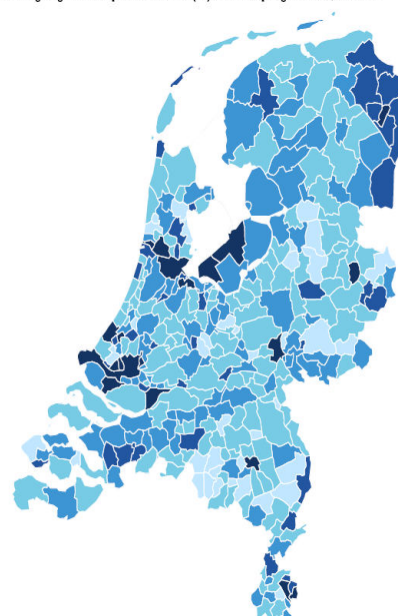
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ENCJ Award for Positive Change

Why debt officers?

- 726,000 households in the Netherlands struggle with problematic debts;
- This only reflects registered debts. Many debts remain unidentified due to aspects such as shame or lack of awareness;
- Debts have a significant impact on the lives of individuals, families and children and strongly influence livelihood and future prospects;
- The court as an 'identifier' for individuals struggling with debts.

Huishoudens met geregistreerde problematische (%) schulden per gemeente, 2023-01



%
minder dan 5,0 5,0 tot 7,0 7,0 tot 9,0 9,0 tot 11,0 11,0 of meer
Onbekend

Juni 2024



DEBT MANAGEMENT

The Judiciary is concerned about the large group of people struggling to cope financially. People in debt are often under severe pressure and are frequently unable to put their own affairs in order. They are regularly involved in legal proceedings and end up in court. Sentencing indebted people repeatedly to pay claims does not contribute to resolving the issues.

The Hague District Court and Rotterdam District Court

Debt officers are appointed at the District Courts of Rotterdam and The Hague; court employees who act as a link between the Judiciary and municipal debt relief. Debt officers and judges observe that with an open and active attitude of judges, debt problems come to the surface and are discussed during the hearing, and that it quickly becomes clear whether a referral to a debt officer can be valuable.

The debt officer

In 2022, the Judiciary decided that all courts will employ debt officers. How does that work? If, during preparation or at a hearing, it appears that one of the parties is struggling with problematic debts. The debt officer, who is trained and appointed in the court, directly engages in a conversation with the person concerned. If possible and desired, the person concerned is referred to the municipal debt assistance service.



The person concerned is given an appointment there as soon as possible to receive help with the debt issues. The deployment of a debt officer has no effect on the course of the court case.

Since this decision, the Overijssel District Court has also started deploying debt officers. Work is now underway to extend the procedure to the other courts.

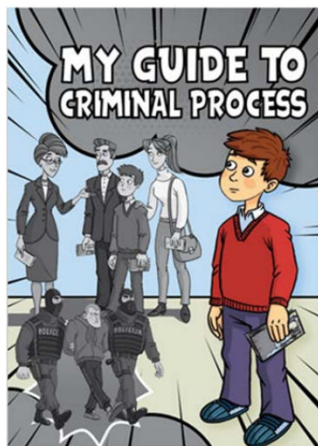
What is the Equal Treatment Bench Book?

- **A guide for judges**, for specialist members of tribunals and for magistrates.
- **Written for judges** by judges and Judicial College Legal Advisers.
- **Public document**, often relied on by members of the public although not aimed at them. Subject to public scrutiny.
- **Aims** to increase awareness and understanding of the different circumstances of people appearing in courts and tribunals.
- **Helps** enable effective communication and suggests **steps** which should increase fair participation by all parties.

ETBB Chapters [2021 edition]

Chapter 1 Litigants in person	Chapter 2 Children and young people and vulnerable adults	Chapter 3 Physical disability	Chapter 4 mental disability
Chapter 5 Capacity	Chapter 6 Sex (gender)	Chapter 7 Modern slavery	Chapter 8 Race
Chapter 9 Religion	Chapter 10 Sexual orientation	Chapter 11 Social exclusion and poverty	Chapter 12 Trans people

My Guide to Criminal Process



- Intended for children victims and witnesses of criminal offenses, aged 12 to 18 years
- Comprehensive guide, which presents in detail the course of the criminal proceedings, the participants in the proceedings and their role, the role of the child, and the rights and obligations of the child during the proceedings, as well as additional notes for parents/guardians, in order to provide the best possible protection of the child
- The guide covers, in a simplified manner, all relevant legal provisions, which apply to the testimony of juveniles in criminal proceedings, and which are further explained by carefully crafted illustrations
- Authored by a judge for minors, a psychologist from the prosecutor's office and an illustrator

322 dogs in 41 states
(November 9, 2023)





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Thank you for your attention !

If you have any questions, please send them to
office@encj.eu