Nearly 600 Jurists from the Country Took Part in the ECLI-BG Training Seminars

On 22 November 2018, with a seminar at the Supreme Administrative Court, the ECLI-BG training campaign has finished. In the period after 17 September, a total of 28 seminars were held - 26 in all district courts of the country and 2 in Sofia - at the SCC and SAC.

The trainings were conducted in connection with the implementation of one of the main objectives of the ECLI-BG project – promotion of the European Case Law Identifier ECLI. The purpose of the seminars was to familiarize the attending magistrates, court employees, legal counsels and in-house lawyers with the ECLI standard and the opportunities to use case law in cross-border cases within the European Union.

From all participants, 591 have registered themselves for the event. From them:

- 431 have filled-in an “Evaluation form”
- 338 have evaluated the seminar with the highest possible rating “very good 5” and think that it will be useful for their practice
- 37 cannot judge if the seminar will be useful for their practice
- Only 3 are those who believe that it will not be useful.

Nearly half of the participants, a total of 246, are judges, and the majority of the others – lawyers, jurisconsults and legal advisers. In the field for recommendations to the organisers of the evaluation form, the participants left mainly positive comments regarding the usefulness of the seminar, the lecture preparation and the training materials.

During the seminars a number of features of the national portal for publication on case law that can be strengthen were discussed. Different proposals were raised, in particular for including summaries of court decisions with higher importance for the legal practice. This approach is being applied in a number of European countries and is appreciated by the representatives of the legal profession. From the presented cross-border legal information services, the one for machine translation of the European Commission was most interesting for the legal practitioners.
An Innovative Approach Showing the ECLI Search Engine

During the training seminars the lecturers used an innovative approach to demonstrate the ECLI Search Engine in the European e-Justice portal. Each participant had the possibility to carry out a case law search from his private mobile phone.

For the demonstration, the lecturers used Miracast device – a wireless technology that enables the projecting of the smartphone screen through multimedia on a wall.

This way the participants were able to get to know the search functionalities in three examples:

- **Case law search by keyword**
- **Case law search by number of legal instrument**
- **Case law search by different criteria – member state, court, type of the legal instrument, date etc.**

Nearly two million Bulgarian court decisions are available through the ECLI Search Engine in the European e-Justice portal.

Round Table Discussion on the Publication of Case Law in Bulgaria and the European Union

On the 16th of November 2018 a round table discussion on “ECLI and the publication of case law in Bulgaria and the European Union – achievements and perspectives” took place in Sofia. The round table was organised by the Union of Bulgarian Jurists and “Apis Europe” JSC as part of the planned activities in the scope of the project “ECLI-BG: Implementation of the European Case Law Identifier in Bulgaria and establishment of interconnection with the e-Justice portal”. Special guests at the event were Kalina Tchapkanova-Kjuchukova, a member of the Supreme Judicial Council, and Milena Kotseva from the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Bulgaria.

The forum was also attended by the Director of “Information Technologies and Judicial Statistics” Directorate of the SJC, Mr. Valeri Mihaylov, and Mr. Svetoslav Nedelchev, Head of “Information Services of the Judiciary” Department in the same Directorate, Prof. Dr. Ivan Ruschev from Sofia University “St. Kl. Ohridski”, Prof. Dr. Tsvetanka Lozanova from the Institute for Legal Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and other specialists in the field of law, information technologies and e-Justice.

The results of the project implementation were presented by its director Mr. Hristo Konstantinov who made the participants acquainted with the main results of the ECLI-BG project – the implementation of ECLI within the national portal for publication of judicial acts and its interconnection with the ECLI Search Interface in the European e-Justice portal. The program included a presentation that shows the present state of ECLI implementation in other EU member states. Ms Dushana Zdravkova – head of the project training activities made a presentation that summarizes the results of the seminars that were conducted in the district courts between 17 September and 9 November 2018. In the course of the discussion the participants exchanged their point of views on the achievements and perspectives regarding future improvements related to the publication of case law of Bulgarian courts. Prof. Dr. Tsvetanka Lozanova from the Institute for Legal Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences stated that since 2004 she is monitoring, researching and reporting the case law of the supreme courts regarding the application of the EU Treaties in human right cases. She noted that those days are days for celebration for the Bulgarian judiciary and that she is happy that this project is being carried out in the year of the Bulgarian presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The round table presentations can be downloaded from the project’s internet site: [Documents].

Bulgaria is the 14th Member State to introduce ECLI and to provide access to it’s judicial decisions through the e-Justice portal accessible for all citizens and professionals from across the European Union. Bulgaria’s court decisions to date are more than 1.9 million. Spain is the only country that has indexed a greater number of judicial acts.