

**European law knowledge management;  
Eurinfra: Court Coordinators European Law.  
The Dutch approach: Contributions to a  
European Judicial Culture.**

In 2001 we faced in the Netherlands within the Judiciary the following problems:



To solve these problems we formulated the following objectives:



We have now reached the following results.





That means that:

1. from their desks, judges and staff lawyers have access via web technology by entering the European Law menu, as a subpart of the overall web system, Porta Iuris, to sources of European law in a user-friendly; integrated and rapid manner. The following sources are concerned:
  - legislation and regulations (in force and consolidated):
  - European conventions and treaties;
  - European legislation;
  - Netherlands implementation regulations;

- Case law:
- Decisions of the Court of Justice, of the General Court, and of the European Court of Human Rights;
- Cases pending before the Court of Justice (including references as for preliminary rulings);
- Texts and commentaries from inter alia the most well-known judicial Dutch magazines;
- Decisions of Netherlands Courts and Tribunals in cases in which Community Law has been applied or explained;
- a toolkit with checklists (such as checklist concerning the reference for a preliminary rulings, EC checklist), manuals and tutorials on the basis of handbooks and training material;
- a “source of information”, including inter alia information by and about Courts

Coordinators European law (CCE); This is a new phenomenon and I will give more explanation on this point later on.

- A “news column” (Commission, Council, ICER,etc.)

2. For queries concerning inter alia references for preliminary rulings and current matters of European law judges and staff members will be served by (the secretariat of) the Court coordinators European law, or may find an answer to their questions on the judiciary intranet.

One of the most important results of the Eurinfra project is the establishing of a network of Court Coordinators European law.

About this network I would like to make some more specific remarks.

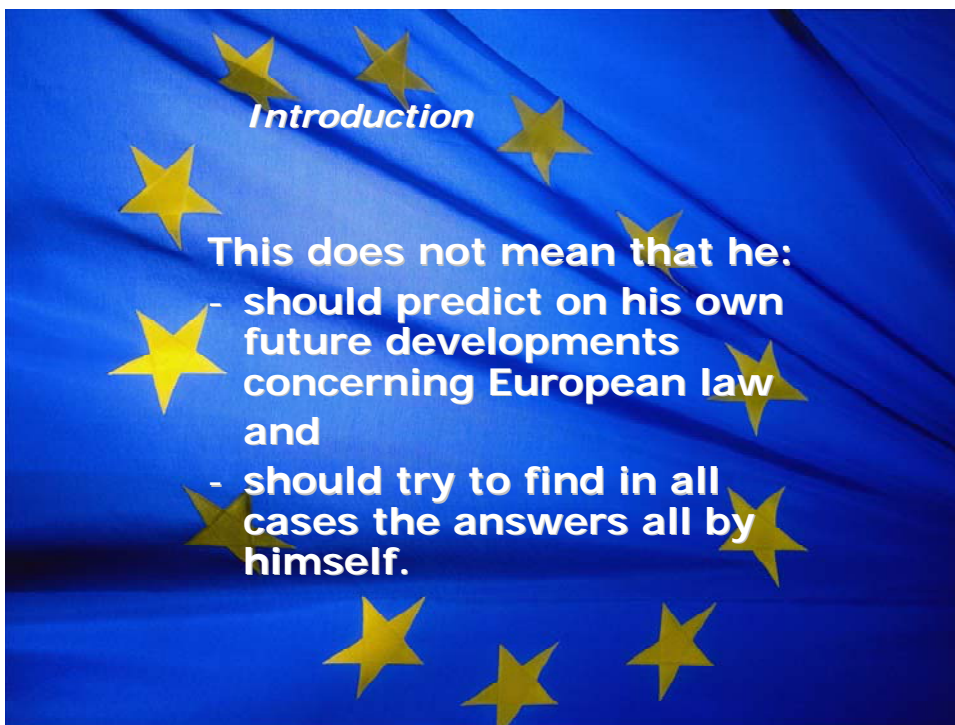




In former days talking about the enormous *acquis communautaire*, consisting in treaties, thousands of regulations, directives and a huge amount of judgments of the European courts, combined with the duty of the national judge to present himself as a European judge as well, most of the time members of the Dutch judiciary had the following vision on themselves:



That common old vision had to be changed and has been changed.



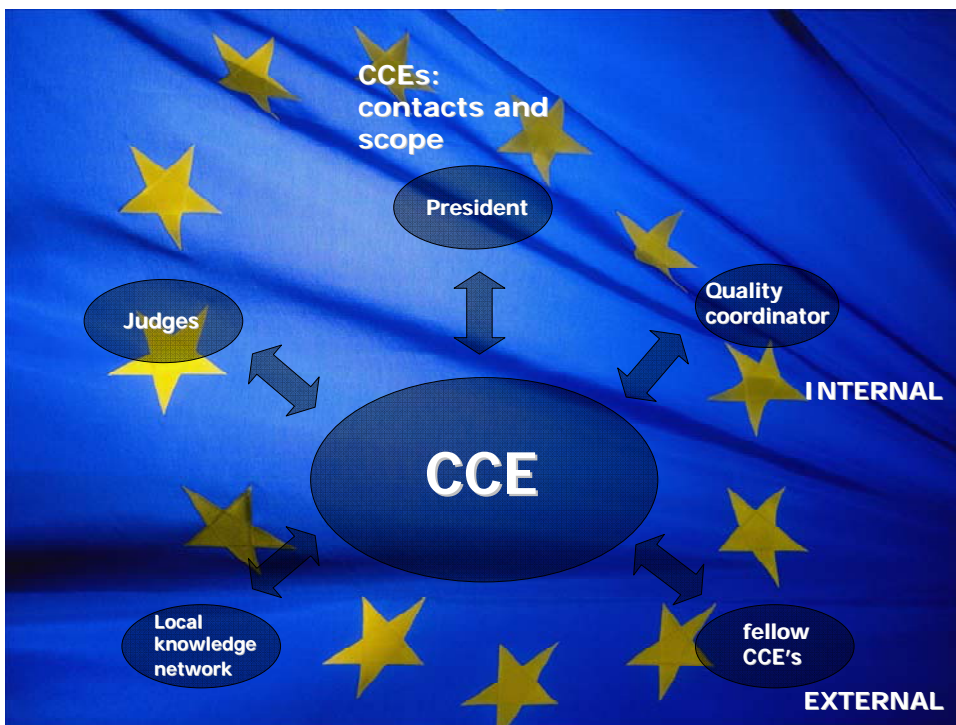
















**GCE**  
*Keeping abreast of and  
passing on*

**Ad 2)**

**The CCE keeps abreast of European law in any event the general part, to this end:**

- he reads the weekly survey of **Porta Iuris (European law)** supplied centrally by **Spir-It**
- peruses the **professional literature**



**CCE**  
*provision of information*

**Ad 3)**

**The CCE knows where and how he can generate knowledge**

- CCE network,
- databanks
- **Porta-Iuris**
- **the Internet**
- **knowledge bases**

**A CCE provides information on European law:**

**by bringing important judgements, procedures, legislation or literature to the attention of his/her colleagues or the CCE network;**

- **via the Eurogroup agenda.**

**Together we're contributing to a proper application of European law so that the litigant can trust on a proper administration of justice.**

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**What are our experiences now in the Netherlands with this system of the court coordinators EU-law when I look back at the last years?**

- **Court coordinators are increasingly being approached internally**
- **The amount of contacts within the network of court coordinators has grown as well**
- **In 2004 and 2008 the entire network of court coordinators has visited the Court of Justice in Luxembourg**
- **We had a combined meeting with our Belgian colleagues**

**Why not established a "helpdesk"**

- **All judges should improve their consciousness on the aspect of European community law.**
- **The level of education of all the judges had to improve**
- **Risk of, shortly said, "intellectual laziness"**

## **An important caveat**

**Allocate more time to the duties of the CCE's in order to embed their activities more securely in the organisation to further improvement of the way the network functions.**

## **Overall conclusions (Eurinfra project)**

**The Eurinfra project:**

- **made European law sources digitally easy available to the Dutch judiciary;**
- **generated a better knowledge of European law**
- **brought knowledge to a higher plan (via courses)**
- **created a network of court coordinators**

## Overall conclusions (CCE-network)

- The network of Court Coordinators European law has offered a framework
- Within which each court the CCE can identify possible European law complications
- Judges have the opportunity to seek outside help, if necessary, via its own court coordinator
- Together judges and CCE's build a solid knowledge infrastructure within the Dutch judiciary

## Ambition for the future

- Keeping to contribute to the development of an European judicial culture.
- Adapt the CCE-network to a changing digital environment
- Broaden the connection with networks in other EU-Member States

Rudolf R. Winter

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