

European Union Collection



INTRODUCTION

The European Union (EU) has its own legal system. EU law, which merges elements of both civil and common law, has direct and indirect effect on the laws of EU member states.

The Middle Temple Library's EU collection was established in 1973 with the UK's accession to the EU and continues to be developed after the UK left the Union in 2020.

The EU collection contains materials relevant both to the EU as a whole and to the individual member states.

LOCATION

Most EU materials can be found on the third floor of the Library. EU law reports and journals are shelved in the corridor leading to the Sherrard Room. Textbooks, both EU-related and those of member states, are located in Bays 308 - 315. Some older materials, including the printed copies of the Official Journal are currently stored off-site and can be requested.

LEGAL RESEARCH TRAINING

The Library offers training in European legal research such as how to search for EU cases and legislation. Sessions in person and online are organised throughout of the year. It is also possible to book a one-to-one session by contacting the Library.

The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple
The Library, Ashley Building
Middle Temple Lane
London EC4Y 9BT
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CONTACT

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PRIMARY LEGISLATION

The main rules and principles of EU law are laid down in the founding Treaties.

Treaties represent primary legislation and they are binding agreements between EU member states.

They set out EU objectives, rules for EU institutions, how decisions are made and the relationship between the EU and its member countries.

Treaties can be found on EUR-Lex – as originally enacted and also in their amended (consolidated) versions.

A consolidated text is a version of a treaty or a legal act which includes its successive amendments and corrigenda. This text has no legal value and is intended to be used as a documentation tool only.

OFFICIAL JOURNAL

The *Official Journal of the European Union* (OJ) is the official collection of all EU legal acts. The electronic version of all issues can be found on [EUR-Lex](#).

The OJ was previously also published in print, but since 1 July 2013 only the electronic version is authentic and produces legal effects.

Alongside specialised subseries, there are two main series of the OJ: L series for legislation; C series for Information and notices.

SECONDARY LEGISLATION

Alongside treaties, we also distinguish secondary legislation (legal acts) and supplementary law. The three main types of legal acts are regulations, directives and decisions.

Regulations are binding legislative acts which are directly applicable in all member states. They do not need to be transposed into national law and they supersede national laws incompatible with their substantive provisions.

Directives are binding legislative acts which, in contrast to Regulations, must be transposed into national law. The choice of form and methods is up to national authorities.

Decisions are legal acts which are binding on those whom they are addressed (a member state, an individual, a company). There is a number of Decisions addressed to undertakings in the competition field. Some of those Decisions are issued directly by the European Commission. Even though these decisions are treated as legislation, some of them are also seen as cases. Selected decisions are published on EUR-Lex. Additionally, it is possible to search for the competition cases via the [European Commission website](#).

TERTIARY LEGISLATION

Delegated acts are legally binding acts that enable the Commission to supplement or amend non-essential parts of EU legislative acts, for example, in order to define detailed measures.

Implementing acts are legally binding acts that enable the Commission – under the supervision of committees consisting of EU countries' representatives – to set conditions that ensure that EU laws are applied uniformly.

Delegated and implemented acts can be found via the [Register of delegated and implemented acts](#)

PREPARATORY ACTS

Preparatory acts are documents used to prepare EU legislation and are produced during the various stages of the legislative and budgetary process (legislative proposals, commons, positions, opinions, resolutions and initiatives), abbreviated as COM, JOIN, SEC/SWD etc..

Most preparatory documents can be found in the final published form on EUR-Lex. You could use the Advanced search or by clicking on EU law and related documents in the Menu and then selecting Preparatory acts. Another option is to use EU institutions own online databases and platforms:

[Register of Commission documents](#) – it contains documents from 2001 onwards. However, even though all documents are required to be made public, they are not always published in full.

[Legislative Observatory](#) (European Parliament) – it contains selected documents from 1994 onwards.

[Public Register of Documents](#) (European Parliament) – it contains documents from 2001 onwards including some that could have been missed on other platforms and documents from third parties.

[Document Register](#) (European Council) – it contains documents from 1999 onwards.

CELEX NUMBER

A CELEX number is a unique identifier for most documents on EUR-Lex. It can be used for searching for documents irrespective of their language. This number is assigned to both legislative documents as well as cases.

EU Water Framework Directive:

CELEX number: 3 2000 L 0060

Sector Year Doc Type Doc Nr.



http://eur-lex.europa.eu

CORRIGENDUM

A corrigendum is an instrument which corrects minor errors (translation-related issues such as grammar or spelling; clerical or obvious mistakes) in an already-adopted EU legal act. It does not affect the content of a legal act.

ELI

ELI stands for the European Legislation Identifier. ELIs are assigned to a wide range of legislation published in the OJ L series and consolidated acts.

SEARCHING CURIA

Information on cases can be found by searching or by browsing. There are two search forms, and several browsing options, including:

- Reports of Cases organised by date
- A numerical list of all cases, divided by Court
- A Digest of case law in French
- An alphabetical table of subject matter in French

!Not every case on Curia comes from the validated ECR, so ensure you are viewing a version as published in the ECR rather than the OJ or a transcript by looking for a link indicating: published in the electronic Reports of Cases or for the Report icon.



ECLI

ECLI stands for the **E**uropean **C**ase **L**aw Identifier. It is a unique identifier which provides an unequivocal citation of judgments from European and national courts of the member states.

Examples:

ECLI:EU:C:1998:27

ECLI:NL:HR:2016:764

COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) interprets EU law at the request of member states, and hears cases brought against member states for not applying EU law or cases brought against the EU itself.

The CJEU consists of two courts:

- The **Court of Justice**
- The **General Court** [until 2009 known as Court of First Instance] (created in 1988)
- The **Civil Service Tribunal** (2004-2016) – this court no longer exist and dealt with disputes between the EU and EU staff. Its jurisdiction was transferred to the General Court in September 2016.

The primary source of authentic judgments from the court is the *Reports of Cases Before the Court of Justice and the General Court* (commonly referred to as *European Court Reports* (ECR)). These reports were published in print through 2011, but are only available electronically after that date through either the EUR-Lex or Curia databases.

There can be a considerable delay before publication of the official EU reports, even in their electronic version. A searchable database of unofficial versions of all cases heard before the Court of Justice, General Court and Civil Service Tribunal since 1954 is available online at the Court's website [curia.europa.eu]. This database includes information about ongoing and pending trials in EU courts.

CITATIONS

C	Cour de Justice / Court of Justice
T	Tribunal de Première Instance / Court of First Instance (1989-2009) General Court (2009-)
F	Tribunal de la Fonction Publique / Civil Service Tribunal

Court-Number/Year = C-1/89; T-1/89; F-1/05

Prior to 1989: Number/Year = 383/88

TEXTBOOKS & ENCYCLOPEDIAS

The library holds a wide selection of textbooks relating to both the European Union and member states. The collection also includes loose-leafs, such as the *Encyclopedia of European Union law: constitutional texts* which provides up-to-date coverage of a range of European law, and more specialised loose-leafs, for example *Company law of Europe*; *EU public procurement*; and *European cross border insolvency*.

LAW REPORTS

Specialist series of law reports, such as *Common Market law reports*, are likely to be more up to date than the ECR. They cover cases heard in both EU and national courts.

The Library holds some law reports that focus on cases from particular EU member states. Cases from the highest French domestic court, for example, are reported in the *Bulletin des Arrêts de la Cour de Cassation*. For UK and Irish decisions on cases involving EU law see either the *European law reports of cases in the United Kingdom and Ireland* or *The All England law reports: European cases*. Both are currently located off-site but their online versions are available in the Library.

Many countries host some freely available case law online, and a list of useful websites can be found on the Library's website under European Links for Lawyers.

JOURNALS & DIGESTS

Journal series are held in several languages, including French and German. Examples of titles held in English include: *European law review* and *European law journal*. Many European journals are also available online through Library subscription databases such as HeinOnline, Westlaw, and Lexis.

European current law is particularly useful, as it provides an overview of recent developments in EU case law, legislation, and member state law. Important developments in other European countries are also addressed. The volumes are easily searchable by subject.

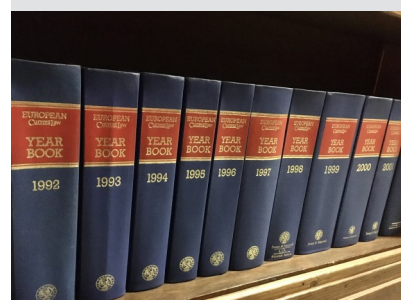


E-BOOKS

The library continues to develop its collection of e-books.

E-books focused on EU law are currently available on various subscribed online platforms, such as Kluwer Competition Law; Kluwer Arbitration; Oxford Legal Research Library; Oxford Competition Law.

Oxford Legal Research Library



USING EUR-LEX

EUR-lex is a complex database that covers predominantly EU law: the authentic OJ, preparatory acts, case law as well as international agreements and EFTA documents.

Each piece of legislation includes:

- Full text of document
- A short summary of the legislation (selection only)
- Information about the document (keywords, dates, relationship between documents)
- Procedure information (listing stages of an act on its legislation journey up to its adoption)
- Linked documents, including amending documents & national transposition measures.

USER ACCOUNT

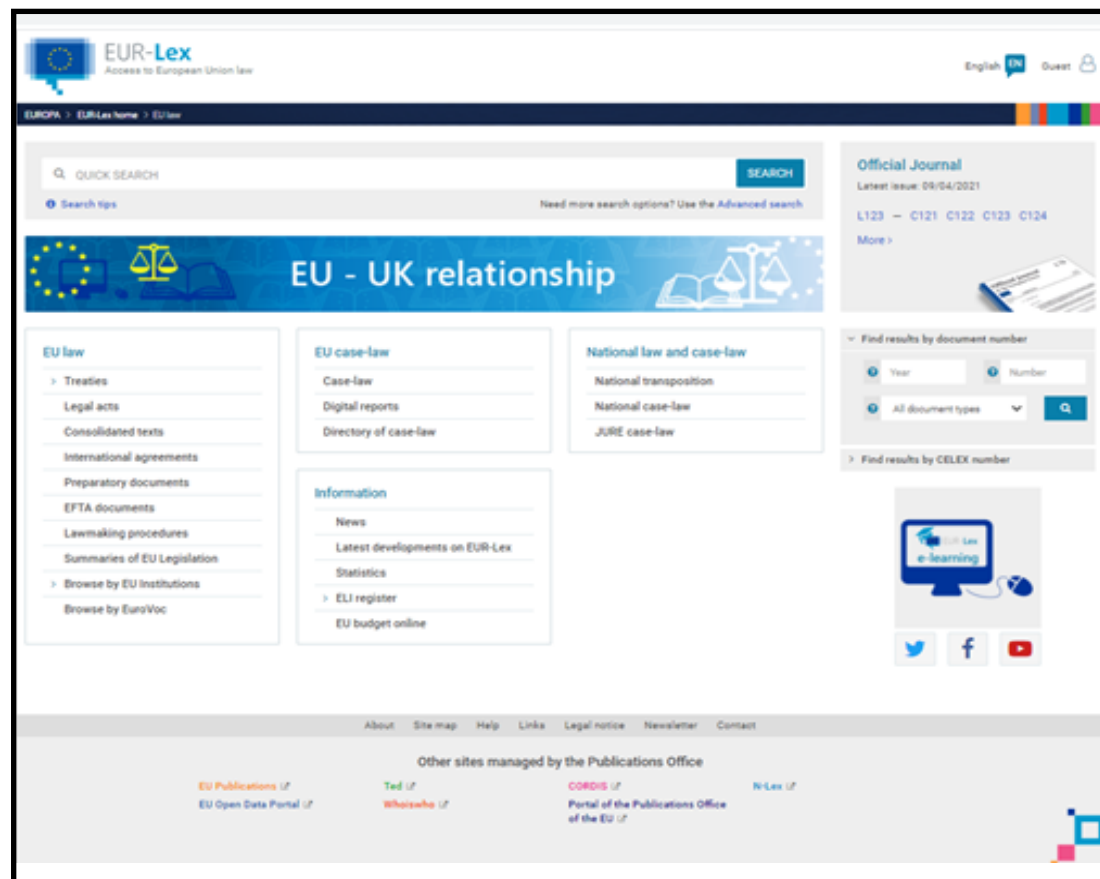
It is possible to create a user account which enables a user to customise their display and search preferences; save documents ('items') and searches; create personalised RSS feeds and use expert search.

SUBSCRIPTION DATABASES

Westlaw's case law database covers cases from the Court of Justice, General Court, Civil Service Tribunal, and EFTA Court. It can be browsed by court name or judgment date. EU legislation hosted on Westlaw includes a variety of primary materials, international agreements, secondary legislation, and supplementary legislation from 1952 onward.

LexisLibrary covers cases from the Court of Justice from 1954 onward, from the General Court from 1989 onward. It also provides access to the *All England law reports: European cases*. Other subscription databases provide additional search specialisms. For example, HeinOnline provides full text access to many European

EUR-LEX



EU & BREXIT

The UK left the EU on 31 January 2020 ('exit date') which was followed by a transition/implementation period, during which EU law still applied in the UK.

This implementation period lasted until 31 December 2020 ('IP completion date').

EU law which applied in the UK until that date has been retained in UK law as 'retained EU law'.

RETAINED EU LAW

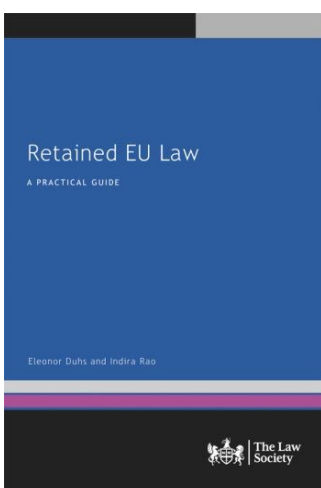
Selected retained EU legislation (all EU legislation which applied directly or indirectly to the UK before 11pm on 31/12/20) is available on www.legislation.gov.uk.

European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 repealed the European Communities Act 1972 and made other provision in connection with the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU, including creating new and unique category of domestic law.

Some commercial platforms offer useful resources on various aspects of Brexit and its impact on law in the United Kingdom. For example:

- Practical Law - Beyond Brexit: the legal implications
- LexisLibrary's Brexit tools

You can also check commentaries on the law in the United Kingdom, such as textbooks, loose-leafs and journals. Most of them reflect the changes related to Brexit and contain useful information specific to the given legal problem or area of law.



A practical guide focused specifically on the topic of retained EU law, which was published in 2021 by the Law Society, is available to be consulted in the Library.



EU EXIT WEB ARCHIVE

The [EU exit Web Archive](#) is a freely available web archive run by the National Archives which provides access to the selected EU law as it stood at IP completion day (31/12/2020).

It contains, among others, EU legal acts, treaties, case law and EFTA documents.

BREXIT LINKS

These [links](#) provide a guide to relevant information regarding the legal site of the UK's referendum and Brexit from various mostly free sources. Links are regularly updated and available on the Middle Temple website.

The most up-to-date information regarding the law profession and Brexit is freely available on the websites of the [Bar Council](#) and the [Law Society](#).



MEMBER STATE LAW

The Library collects textbooks and e-books as well as various series on the law of individual member states of the European Union. Most books are available in English.

MEMBER STATE LEGISLATION

The Library holds selected copies of the legislation of several member states including French codes in the Dalloz series, the Belgian Code in *Les Codes Larcier*. Both series are now located off-site.

Where possible English translations of member states' civil and criminal codes are also collected. These titles include, but are not limited to: *The Civil Code of the Netherlands*, *Italian Civil Code*, *Greek Civil Code* and *The German Criminal Code*.

Many nations host legislation online, and there are a variety of internet portals that provide links to national legislation such as N-lex [eur-lex.europa.eu/n-lex/]. EUR-Lex increasingly provides links to relevant national legislation that implements EU legislation.

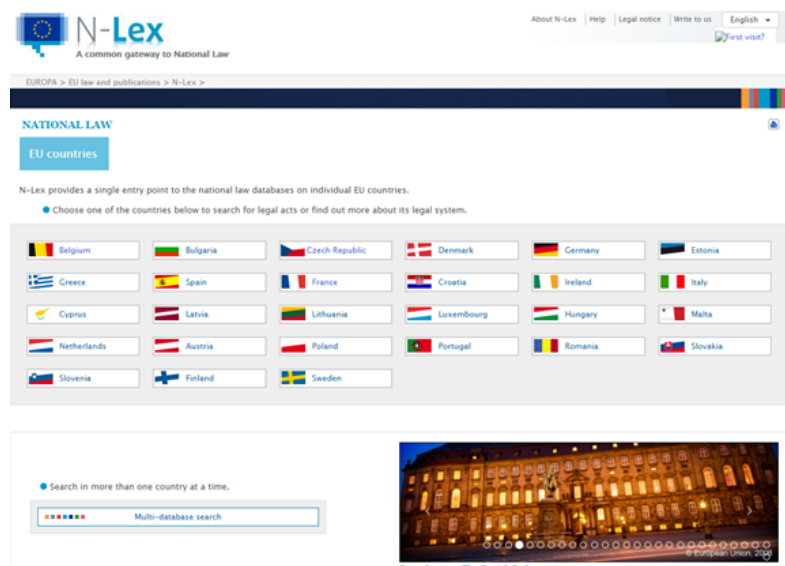
For additional member state resources see the National Information guide available in the European Links for Lawyers section of the library website [www.middletemple.org.uk/library-and-archive/library].

N-LEX

It compliments EUR-Lex and it is a single entry point to individual EU countries' national law databases.

It will help you:

- Find descriptions of each country's database content (different types of national law) and instructions on making targeted searches
- Use a standard search function to search databases in any EU country individually or in more than one country at the same time
- Retrieve documents directly from these databases
- Find documents in any EU language



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For UK and Irish decisions on cases involving EU law see either the *European Law Reports of Cases in the United Kingdom and Ireland* (off-site but also available via Hein online in the Library) or *All England Law Reports: European Cases* (off-site but also available via LexisLibrary in the Library).

Information and links on laws and practices in all EU countries can be found on e-Justice portal [<https://e-justice.europa.eu/>]. A beta version of the portal is now available [<https://beta.e-justice.europa.eu/>]

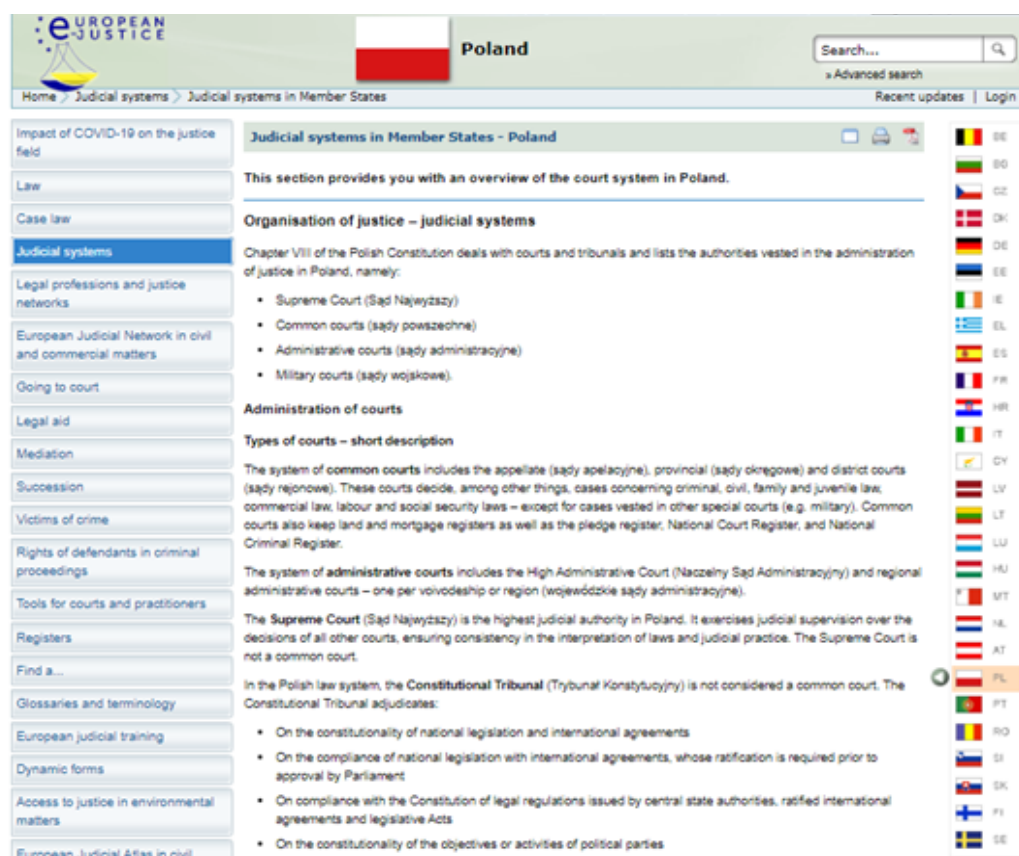
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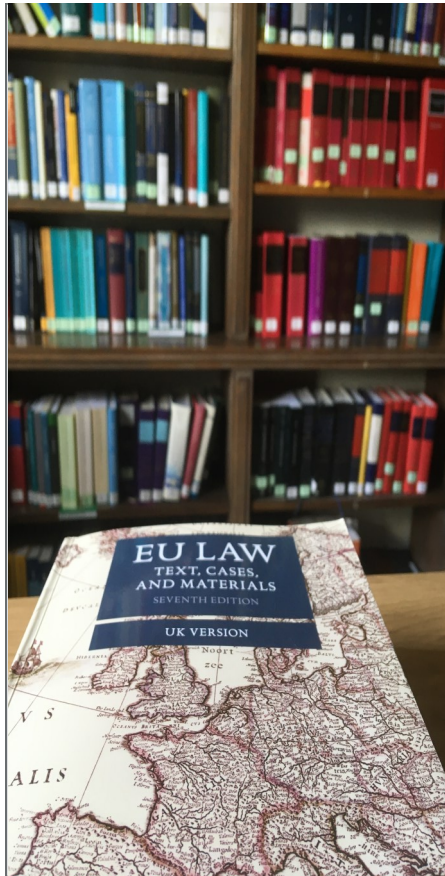
E-JUSTICE PORTAL

The portal provides a wealth of information and links on laws and practices in all EU countries.

There is information on legal aid, judicial training, European small claims and videoconferencing as well as links to legal databases, online insolvency, business and land registers. The portal also includes user-friendly forms for various judicial proceedings.

It provides information about official websites, legal databases of individual member states and provides an overview of their legal system and court structure.





ONLINE RESOURCES

Archive of European Integration (AEI) - Access to EC & EU official documents relating to integration & unification. Managed by the University of Pittsburgh. aei.pitt.edu

CURIA - Court of Justice's searchable database of all cases reported in the ECR from 1954 on, including all current cases. Links to the electronic ECR. curia.europa.eu

EFTA Court - Searchable database of cases. eftacourt.int

EUR-Lex - Incorporates former CELEX & PreLex. Searchable database of the electronic OJ & ECR. Documents include: treaties, legislation, preparatory acts, case law & EFTA and international documents. eur-lex.europa.eu

EUROPA - Portal to all EU departments. Information on many topics including: integration, EU institutions, policies, official publications & contacts. europa.eu

European e-Justice Portal - The portal provides a wealth of information and links on laws and practices in all EU countries. <https://beta.e-justice.europa.eu/>

IALS Library Research Guides - Introductory guides to legal sources for many international jurisdictions, including the EU & some member states. <https://libguides.ials.sas.ac.uk/eu>

LAW.gov: Library of Congress - Links to online sources of constitutions, court information & other legal materials from nations around the world. www.loc.gov/law/help/guide/nations.php

N-Lex - Portal providing access to legislation, official journals & national databases of EU member states. eur-lex.europa.eu/n-lex/

Oxford LibGuides: EU Law - Background on the EU, links & information for finding legislation, case law & commentary. libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/law-eu

WorldLII (World Legal Information Institute) - Decisions from the EU Commission, Court of Justice & ECHR. Searchable databases of legislation & cases from member states. www.worldlii.org

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