



Dear ECBA members,

It is no surprise that the EPPO has caught the attention of law professionals all over Europe. The ECBA has decided as such to dedicate the 2021 autumn conference to this topic, with a special focus on the defence in EPPO proceedings – EPPO meets European Defence: striving for the highest standard of fair proceedings in Europe.

Even before the entry into force of the Council Regulation (EU) 2017/1939 of 12 October 2017 implementing enhanced cooperation on the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office, the ECBA has set its purpose to prepare general legal and practical information from each jurisdiction regarding this topic.

Since its first days, the working group decided to create useful tools for the ECBA members in their future professional activities involving the EPPO and to inform the ECBA policy in relation to the EPPO.

Having as the defence aspects as its main focus, the EPPO working group has chosen as its first topic of utmost relevance the access to the case file in criminal proceeding conducted by the EPPO. The ECBA and the working group are of the view that access to the case files should be granted following to the same rules in all EPPO cases and, in any event, guaranteeing the same level of effectiveness of the rights of defence. However, as this topic is mostly regulated by internal law provisions, we are collecting information on how access to the case file works in each Member State.

Currently, we are discussing a set of questions to which we are seeking to find answers from ECBA members to gain more knowledge on the internal regulations and practices regarding the access to the case file. These questions are ranging through various topics, such as the relevant EU legislation and implementation, the content of the right to access the case file (including the possible special situations of deprivation of liberty), practicalities and remedies in the event of denial of access.

The EPPO working group is happy to extend an invitation to all those interested in joining our efforts into the better understanding of the newly operational European Public Prosecutor's Office to join our working group.

A special invitation is extended to any ECBA Members practicing in one of the following countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, for which we are currently lacking members in the EPPO working group.

ECBA Members may join our working group by writing to Ms. Antoaneta Roman, ECBA Administrator, at secretariat@ecba.org