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Access to European Union law

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European Legislation Identifier (ELI) – background

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@media screen and (max-width: 799px){ .text{ font-size:16px !important; font-weight:700; margin:15px 0px; } } @media screen and (min-width: 800px){ .text{ font-size:22px !important; font-weight:700; margin:15px 0px; } } .eli_timeline { width:85%; border:1px solid #C2C2C2; border-radius:4px; padding:10px 30px; display:flex; flex-wrap: wrap; /*align-items:flex-end;*/ clear:both; overflow: hidden; } .eli_event { width:100%; float:left; display:flex; align-items:center; /*padding:10px 0px;*/ } .eli_date { float:left; min-width:21%; font-weight:700; text-align:right; } .eli_image { display:flex; height:100%; float:left; padding:10px 20px; background-image:url('cell_bg.png'); background-repeat: repeat-y; background-position: center; } .eli_img { width:75px; /*filter:invert(37%) sepia(48%) saturate(1026%) hue-rotate(160deg) brightness(88%) contrast(87%);*/ } .eli_desc { float:left; width:75%; font-weight:400; }
```

The need for ELI

ELI was created to provide a standardised approach to accessing and exchanging legal information across EU Member States and more abroadly at a European level. The initiative was driven by the increasing complexity of managing legal data in today's digital age, where consistency and interoperability are crucial.

ELI's origins

ELI was drawn up as part of the [European Forum of Official Gazettes](#) on Luxembourg's initiative. This project, run jointly by the EU institutions and EU Member States, is enshrined in the Council conclusions of 6 November 2017 on the European Legislation Identifier (2017/C 441/05). *

The initiative contributes to the vision of a European area of freedom, security and justice, respecting both fundamental rights and the diverse legal traditions of EU Member States (as set out in [Article 67\(1\)](#) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union).

To achieve true judicial cooperation across Europe, it is not enough to simply know EU law—understanding the national legal systems of EU countries, including their specific legislation, is equally essential.

* *The [Council conclusions](#) of 6 November 2017 on the European Legislation Identifier are built on the [Council conclusions published on 26 October 2012 \(2012/C 325/02\)](#).*

Funding

ELI is funded through the [Digital Europe Programme](#) .

Timeline

2010

Original idea was born at the European Forum of Official Gazettes in Rome. Immediately supported by the Publications Office of the European Union.

2010-2012

Creation of a working group within the Forum of National Gazettes (EFOG)

2012

[Council conclusions inviting the introduction of the European Legislation Identifier \(52012XG1026\(01\)\)](#)

ELI TaskForce set up in December 2012 with the support of the Council of the European Union Working Party on E-law

2014

The first ELI Ontology (v.1.0) is released

2017

[Council conclusions of 6 November 2017 on the European Legislation Identifier \(52017XG1222\(02\)\)](#)

2020

The ELI-DL standard is published

2024

The latest ELI Ontology (v1.5),
the ELI Impact Ontology (v1.0) and
the ELI DL Ontology (v3.0) are released

Last update: 14 October 2025