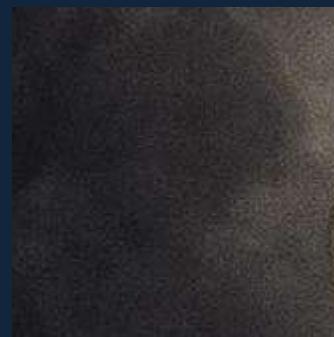




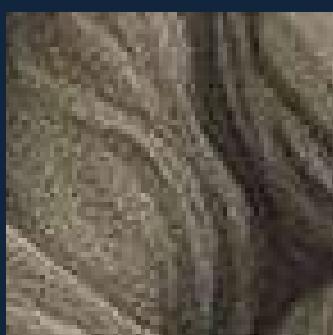
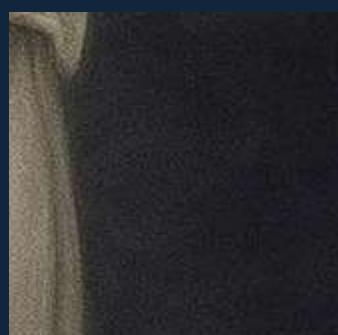
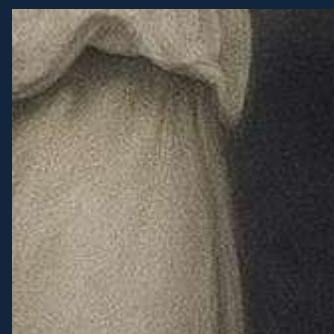
HUMANIZING CRIMINAL JUSTICE



**6-7
February
2026**



**LEAP
Athens**



**Fair
Trials**

Who We Are

The Legal Experts Advisory Panel (LEAP) is Fair Trials' European network of experts in criminal justice and human rights which works to promote fair trial rights in Europe.

Originally funded by a European Commission project grant, LEAP has become a formal network and is now a unique and respected voice on criminal justice and human rights within Europe, with over 300 members from all 27 EU Member States (LEAP Members), UK and Switzerland.

LEAP is a growing network with representatives from law firms, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and people with lived-experiences in the criminal justice system.



Law Firms

Legal practitioners are in the front lines of the fight to protect the rights to a fair trial. Their first-hand experience in police stations, detentions centre and courts in an invaluable tool to identify and challenge failures and abuses in the criminal justice system.



Academic Institutions

The academic institutions help analyse comparative trends and identify the gaps in existing frameworks. Their research work is key to inform legal changes. Academics also provide solid expertise into the legal trainings organized by Fair Trials Europe.



Civil Society Organizations

Civil society organizations help to raise awareness about fair trial issues among the general public and advocate for change. They act as a watchdog against any backsliding on defense rights.



EIPAC

The European Impacted Persons Advisory Council (EIPAC) was created in September 2024 with the aim to advise Fair Trials Europe on its work, campaigns, policies, and strategy. The EIPAC is composed of people with lived experience in various aspects of the criminal legal system who are committed to supporting its reform.

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Welcome

Welcome to the [LEAP Annual Conference 2026](#), and to [Athens](#).

We are delighted to bring the LEAP network together once again for what has become a key moment of exchange, reflection, and collective action for defence lawyers, academics, civil society actors, policy-makers, and people with lived experience of the criminal justice system from across Europe.

This year's conference takes place under the theme "["Humanizing Criminal Justice"](#)", a call to reflect critically on how criminal justice systems operate in practice, whom they serve, and at what cost. At a time when efficiency, automation, and security-driven approaches increasingly shape criminal proceedings across Europe, LEAP 2026 invites us to re-centre fairness, dignity, and human rights at the heart of justice.

Over two days, the programme brings together diverse perspectives to examine some of the most pressing challenges facing the criminal justice system today. From the growing use of artificial intelligence and data-driven tools in investigations, to the protection of vulnerable suspects, access to defence, and the lived realities of detention and cross-border cooperation, our discussions will explore how legal frameworks, policies, and practices can either undermine or strengthen fair trial rights.

A defining feature of LEAP, and of this conference, is its commitment to meaningful participation. Alongside legal and policy expertise, the programme foregrounds the voices and experiences of people directly impacted by criminal justice systems, recognising their essential role in shaping more just, humane, and effective reforms.

The breakout sessions are designed to foster open, practical, and forward-looking conversations, encouraging collaboration across disciplines, jurisdictions, and lived experience.

More than a forum for legal updates, the LEAP Annual Conference is a space to build connections, challenge assumptions, and develop strategies that extend beyond the event itself. We hope that the

conversations held in Athens will inform your work, inspire new collaborations, and contribute to collective efforts to strengthen fair trial rights and human dignity across Europe.

We are very grateful to all speakers, moderators, and participants for contributing their time, expertise, and perspectives, and we look forward to a rich and engaging conference together.

For any practical questions or support before or during the conference, please do not hesitate to get in touch:

 simona.didio@fairtrials.net

 WhatsApp: +32 (0)2 360 04 71

We look forward to welcoming you to Athens and to a stimulating and meaningful conference together.

Warm regards,

Simona Di Dio (she/her)

Network Coordinator,

Fair Trials



The Venue: St George Lycabettus Hotel

LEAP 2026 will welcome you at **the St George Lycabettus Hotel**, one of the most prestigious hotels in Athens.

With spacious rooms and excellent facilities, you will be able to enjoy the conference at its best.



From the terrace, you can take in breathtaking views of the Acropolis while networking with your peers and discussing the conference panels.

If you're someone who likes to start the day early with a workout, the hotel gym is at your disposal.



After the conference, you can unwind and relax in the hot tub or spa.



How to reach the venue

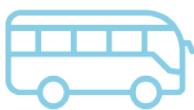


From the airport

When you arrive to Athens International Airport, follow the signs to **the Metro Station**.



Take Metro Line 3 (**Blue Line**) towards Dimotiko Theater and get off at **Syntagma Station**. Exit the station towards **Kolonaki/Vasilissis Sofias Avenue**. This journey takes approximately 40-45 minutes. From Syntagma Square, the hotel is about a 15-20 minutes.



From the airport, you can also take the **X95 Express Bus** towards **Syntagma Square**. Get off at the last stop, Syntagma Square. From there, it is a 15-20 minutes walk to the hotel. The total travel time from the airport is approximately 60 minutes depending on traffic.



If you are carrying heavy luggage or prefer not to walk uphill from Syntagma Square, you can take a taxi directly to the hotel.

The address of St George Lycabettus hotel is: **Kleomenous 2, Kolonaki**.

LEAP 2026 Speakers & Moderators



Alessio Scandurra

Alessio is an Italian researcher and human rights advocate specializing in prison conditions and detainees' rights. He is the National Coordinator of the Antigone Observatory on prison conditions in Italy and has coordinated the European Prison Observatory since 2012, overseeing research and reporting on detention standards across 13 European countries. He holds a law degree from the University of Florence, an MPhil from the University of Exeter, and a PhD from the University of Pisa.

Anna Karamoschoglou

Anna has been a judicial officer since 1997 and is currently Appeals Prosecutor in Thessaloniki. He holds a law degree from Democritus University of Thrace and master's degrees in Criminal and Criminological Sciences and Forensic Medicine and Forensic Psychiatry. He oversees the Department of Enforcement of Decisions and has previously managed departments including Domestic Violence and Judicial Assistance. He has contributed to legislative drafting aligning Greek law with EU Regulation 2018/1805 and has taught at the Judicial School since 2017, delivering seminars on the European Arrest Warrant.

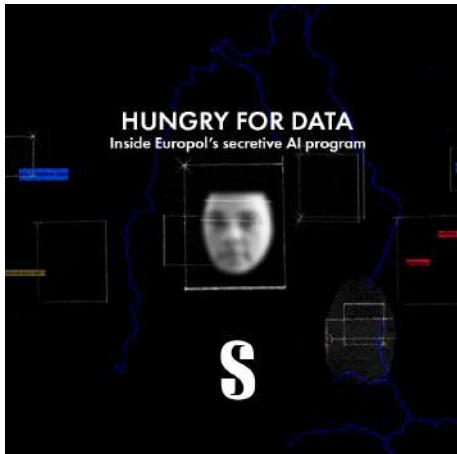


Anna Pivaty

Anna is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Law at Radboud University Nijmegen, focusing on criminal law, digital technologies, and social sciences. Her research examines the digitalisation of criminal justice, including algorithmic and AI systems, and their effects on procedural fairness, access to justice, and democratic participation. She has led EU-funded projects on criminal defence training and brings extensive experience working with legal professionals, policymakers, and civil society, building on prior roles in international human rights and justice policy.



LEAP 2026 Speakers & Moderators



Apostolis Fotiadis

Apostolis covers EU policy issues including developments in population movement, security and defense, privacy and big data policies. In the past, he has co-operated with many international media outlets and organizations. He has authored numerous reports, published two books on EU migration, border control and surveillance policies, and has been a member of numerous cross-border investigations.

Chryssa Mela

Chryssa Mela is a Senior Legal and Policy Officer at Fair Trials Europe, coordinating projects on EU criminal law, procedural rights, and human rights in judicial cooperation. She contributes to organizational leadership and represents Fair Trials before EU institutions and policy platforms. An attorney with the Athens Bar Association, she has experience in human rights research, trial monitoring, and legal project coordination in refugee protection. She holds an LLM in Public International Law from the University of Amsterdam and an Advanced Master's in EU Interdisciplinary Studies from the Université libre de Bruxelles.



Cristiana Bianco

Cristiana is an Italian and German criminal defense lawyer with offices in Munich and Naples, specializing in European and international criminal law and human rights. With over 25 years of experience, she has litigated nationally and internationally, including before the European Court of Human Rights, and served as a Senior Lawyer at the ECHR Registry. Her expertise covers cross-border criminal justice, extradition, and the protection of detainees' rights, and she is actively engaged in human rights advocacy through leadership roles in organizations such as Antigone, the European Criminal Bar Association, and Fair Trials.

LEAP 2026 Speakers & Moderators



Dara Robinson

Dara is a recently retired criminal defence lawyer with extensive experience in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, covering serious crime from first-instance trials to final appeals, including cases before the European Court of Human Rights. He has handled numerous cross-border cases, including extraditions, European Arrest Warrants, and multi-country investigations. Dara has been closely involved with Fair Trials for decades, serving on its Legal Experts Advisory Panel since its inception and as Advisory Board member for Ireland for over ten years.

Demetra Sorvatzioti

Dr Demetra Fr. Sorvatzioti is Professor of Law, Vice Rector for International Affairs and Research, and Head of the Law Department at the University of Limassol. A trial lawyer admitted to the Greek and Cyprus Bars, she holds PhDs in Law and Criminology and specialises in international criminal procedure, fair trial rights, and cross-border judicial cooperation, with a focus on the European Arrest Warrant and extradition. She serves on the Advisory Board of Fair Trials International, is a National Expert for Fair Trials in Cyprus, and is a member of the Clooney Foundation for Justice Expert Panel.



Dimitrios Giannoulopoulos

Professor Dimitrios Giannoulopoulos is Head of Department at The City Law School, City St George's University of London, an Academic Bencher at the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple, and an Associate Tenant at Garden Court Chambers. He holds a PhD from Université Paris I (Panthéon-Sorbonne) and multiple master's degrees in criminal procedure, and has taught as a Visiting Professor at KU Leuven and Panteion University. His research focuses on comparative criminal procedure, international human rights, suspects' rights, judicial independence, and the impact of populism on human rights.

LEAP 2026 Speakers & Moderators



Federica Coppola

Federica teaches criminal law at IE University Law School in Madrid. She holds a PhD in Law from the European University Institute and has held positions at the Max Planck Institute and Columbia University, where she was a Robert A. Burt Presidential Scholar. Her research explores how law, behavioral science, and lived experience can inform more humane penal and prison systems. She is the author of two monographs and co-editor of *Social Rehabilitation and Criminal Justice* (Routledge, 2024).

Georgios Pyromallis

Georgios is the head of George Pyromallis Law Office, founded in 2006, and an expert in Greek, European, and international criminal law. He specialises in business and financial crime, white-collar crime, European Arrest Warrants, extradition, and mutual assistance, representing domestic and international corporations, governments, and institutions. He has handled some of Greece's most high-profile extradition cases and has collaborated with Fair Trials since 2007 as a member of the Legal Experts Advisory Panel.



Gwen Jansen De Wolf

Gwen is a criminal defence lawyer specialising in cross-border organised crime, extradition, and cases involving digital evidence, including proceedings before the Dutch Supreme Court and juvenile defence. She serves as Vice-Chair of the European Criminal Bar Association Working Group on "Cybercrime, Tech and AI" and is an advisory board member of Fair Trials, contributing to discussions on procedural safeguards and fundamental rights. Gwen regularly lectures at international conferences and ERA, and has developed a strong international network of criminal defence lawyers.

LEAP 2026 Speakers & Moderators



Jerome Mangelinckx

Jerome is Global Policy Manager at Penal Reform International, with extensive experience in drug policy reform, penal and penitentiary reform, and human rights. He co-founded the Research Centre on Drugs and Human Rights (CIDDH) in Peru, focused on protecting the rights of those most affected by the war on drugs. He has coordinated CIDDH's Legal Clinic and developed training for public defenders to improve legal aid for women imprisoned for drug offences.

Laura Stelzer

Laura holds an academic background in international law and governance. They are a Legislative Officer at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Justice, specialising in procedural guarantees, pre-trial detention standards, and judicial cooperation in criminal asset recovery. Previously, they were a Fellow at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Fundamental and Human Rights in Vienna and a research assistant at the University of Edinburgh, focusing on child-friendly justice, human dignity, and torture prevention.



Lidija Horvat

Dr. Lidija Horvat is an attorney at law and founder of her own firm in Zagreb, Croatia, with expertise in criminal law. She holds a Doctor of Law in Criminal-law sciences from the University of Zagreb, where her doctoral research included interviews with over 260 individuals serving prison sentences, and she has published on pre-trial detention, European Arrest Warrants, and procedural safeguards for vulnerable groups. She mentors law students, is a member of the Croatian Association for Criminal Law and Practice, and serves on the Legal Expert Advisory Panel and Advisory Board of Fair Trials International.

LEAP 2026 Speakers & Moderators



Lili Krámer

Lili is a Senior Programme Officer and Researcher at the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, specialising in fair and humane criminal justice, alternatives to imprisonment, and prison-family relations. She contributes to civil society reporting on the supervision of the European Court of Human Rights' pilot judgment on prison conditions in Hungary and is a founding member of FECSKE, a support network for people affected by incarceration. She also teaches Criminology at Eötvös Loránd University and serves on the Board of Directors of the Hungarian Society of Criminology.

Margaret Satterthwaite

Margaret is a Professor of Law at New York University School of Law, where she directs the Legal Empowerment and Judicial Independence Clinic and serves as faculty director of the Bernstein Institute for Human Rights. In 2022, she was appointed by the UN Human Rights Council as Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers. Her work focuses on judicial independence and access to justice, and she has published extensively while advocating for rights at both international and domestic fora.



Nicola Canestrini

Nicola is an Italian criminal defense attorney with over two decades of experience defending fundamental rights in national and international courts. He is admitted to Italy's highest courts and the International Criminal Court, with expertise in international criminal law, extradition, and European criminal cooperation, including the European Arrest Warrant. His litigation before the Luxembourg Court of Justice led to a new refusal ground for the EAW, and he serves as a national expert to the CCBE Criminal Law Committee and a member of the Italian Commission of European and International Law.

LEAP 2026 Speakers & Moderators



Nuno Pontes

Nuno is a sociologist specialising in prisons and prison-related issues, with extensive experience in research, advocacy, and legal aid. He has been involved in multiple initiatives, including the European Prison Observatory, ISCTE University Institute of Lisbon, and founding research and NGO projects in Portugal and the UK focused on prison conditions and social reintegration. Since 2024, he serves as President of CONFIAR and as Research Coordinator at the Human Rights Interdisciplinary Studies Centre, and joined the European Impacted Persons Advisory Council of Fair Trials Europe in 2025.

Simona Di Dio

Simona is a human rights advocate and Italian-qualified lawyer with over ten years of experience in social inclusion and civil society empowerment. She specialises in capacity building across formal and non-formal education, working with universities, policymakers, NGOs, and civil society actors across Europe. As Network Coordinator, she leads multistakeholder cooperation and advocacy, including coordinating Fair Trials Europe's Legal Experts Advisory Panel (LEAP) and working with the European Impacted Persons Advisory Council (EIPAC).



Sveva Franco

Sveva Franco is a Legal and Policy Officer at the European Commission Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers (DG JUST), in the unit dealing with Procedural Criminal Law. She joined the Commission five years ago, after working in the Criminal Court in Rome. Her work in DG JUST mainly focuses on matters related to procedural rights for suspects and accused persons, *ne bis in idem*, but also admissibility of evidence in cross-border cases and transfer of criminal proceedings.

LEAP 2026 Speakers & Moderators



Tasos Theofilou

Tasos is a journalist, researcher, and author specialising in criminal justice and prisons. He is a member of the European Impacted Persons Advisory Council (EIPAC), drawing on five years of lived experience in Greek prisons, following which he was acquitted of all charges. His work focuses on trials of social interest, prison issues, and criminal justice, particularly cases involving marginalised groups and state, racist, or fascist violence, and includes publications on life in Greek prisons.

Thanasis Kampagiannis

Thanasis is a lawyer who lives and works in Athens. He has studied law at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and took a master's degree in political science and history in Panteion University in Athens. He is practising criminal law and has represented victims of racist violence in court, amongst others the Egyptian migrants who had been physically attacked by a "Golden Dawn" battalion squad in the "Golden Dawn" trial. He is currently a councillor in the Board of the Athens Bar Association.



Romain Lanneau

Romain is a legal researcher working at the intersection of migration, asylum, and digital technologies in public policy. He conducts research for Statewatch on policing, surveillance, data protection, and European migration and asylum policies, and has authored key reports including the Data Protection Handbook on Asylum and Migration in Europe. He also works as a legal advisor with Front-LEX on strategic litigation and has collaborated as an independent consultant with organisations such as Fair Trials International, the European Network Against Racism, and Data Rights.

LEAP 2026 Speakers & Moderators



Vincent Jamin

Vincent is a French prosecutor with a background in financial crime and extensive experience in European and international judicial cooperation. He has held senior roles at the French Ministry of Justice and Eurojust, including Head of Eurojust's Operations Department, where he oversaw resources and the agency's digitalisation strategy. Since October 2023, he has served as Administrative Director of Eurojust.

LEAP 2026 Breakout Session Facilitators



Alex Tinsley

Alex is a barrister (England & Wales) specialising in criminal justice, international human rights, and the law of the sea. Based in London, he works on extradition and mutual legal assistance cases and specialises internationally in INTERPOL and human rights litigation. He regularly advises on cross-border cases and international complaints before the ECHR and UN bodies, and consults for United Nations bodies on criminal justice issues, while continuing to cooperate with Fair Trials as a consultant.

Angelica Vieira

Angelica completed an MSc in Comparative Criminal Justice following a formative experience with the criminal justice system, while volunteering with social justice organisations as a grant writer and legal policy advisor. She has interned as a Legal Research Assistant at the Centre for African Justice, Peace and Human Rights and at the Office of the Prosecutor of the UN International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, focusing on the Rwandan genocide, and currently works in the Victim Care and Capacity-Building Departments at Victim Support Europe while serving as a freelance consultant and member of Fair Trials Europe's European Impacted Persons Advisory Council.



Asya Mandzhukova

Asya is a criminal defense lawyer from Bulgaria and managing partner at Mandzhukova, Shopov, Petrov Law Firm in Sofia. She has over 20 years of experience, is recognized as a leading expert in European Arrest Warrant proceedings, and serves on Fair Trials' Legal Experts Advisory Board. She is frequently invited as a speaker, educator, and adviser on cross-border criminal legislation, including playing a key role in introducing judicial review of the EAW in pre-court proceedings in Bulgaria.

LEAP 2026 Breakout Session Facilitators



Elton Kalica

Elton is a researcher and human rights activist from Italy, co-founder of Italian Convict Criminology, with a background in Political Science from Padua University. He has published books and articles on long-term confinement, life sentences, and prison ethnography, and specialises in Critical Criminology, Abolitionism, Convict Criminology, and research methodology in prison settings. Since 2022, he has developed a mentoring project at Padua Prison and serves on the editorial board of *Ristretti Orizzonti* and the scientific committee of Padua University's Master's program in Critical Criminology.

Karim Ridwan

Karim is a certified legal interpreter and human rights activist who facilitates communication between refugees, minority communities, and legal authorities across Europe. He serves as an advocacy officer at a leading European civil society organisation combating anti-Muslim hatred and is frequently invited by EU and UN institutions to provide testimony from impacted individuals. His work and lived experience, including facing a SLAPP for speaking out against structural racism, give him a deep understanding of systemic disparities within the legal system.



Michele Panzavolta

Michele is Professor of Criminal Law and Cybercrime at KU Leuven, Belgium, and former Vice-Dean for International Affairs, with previous academic appointments at Maastricht and Bologna. He specialises in European and comparative criminal law, focusing on criminal procedure, procedural rights, asset confiscation, and judicial cooperation, and has led numerous EU-funded research projects. A qualified Italian attorney, he has around ten years of practical experience and has also acted as a consultant to the Italian Parliament and the World Bank.

LEAP 2026 Breakout Session Facilitators



Mikołaj Pietrzak

Mikołaj is a Polish advocate, graduate of the University of Warsaw Faculty of Law and Administration, and holder of the Cambridge University Certificate in English and European Law. He has served as Dean of the Warsaw Bar Association, chaired the Human Rights Council of the Polish Bar Council, and sits on national and international human rights boards, specialising in criminal and constitutional law, litigating before the ECHR and Poland's Supreme Court, and is admitted to the List of Counsel of the ICC and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

Sophie Rolf

Sophie is a Pro Bono Lawyer at Freshfields in London, advising international NGOs and major charities and leading the firm's Fair Trials Index Project to strengthen fair trial standards globally. She oversees corporate client pro bono collaborations, public legal education programmes, and NGO governance advice, while maintaining an active caseload supporting vulnerable and marginalised individuals, including survivors of trafficking and disability and welfare appeals. Admitted in the Supreme Court of New South Wales and the High Court of Australia, she holds an LLB (Hons) and a Bachelor of International Security Studies from the Australian National University.



Vânia Costa Ramos

Vânia is a partner at Carlos Pinto de Abreu e Associados in Portugal and chairperson of the ECBA. She leads the firm's International, European, Extradition, and Mutual Legal Assistance practice and has extensive experience representing foreign clients and lawyers, handling EPPO cases, and bringing cases before the European Court of Human Rights. She is admitted to the List of Counsel of the International Criminal Court, works with criminal defence lawyers across Europe, represents victims, and participates in inspections of places of deprivation of liberty as a member of the CPT.

LEAP 2026 Breakout Session Facilitators



Wael Habbal

Wael Haffar Habbal is a Syrian activist, community organizer, and non-traditional scholar whose work is forged by over a decade of firsthand experience in the humanitarian field. A survivor of torture and forcibly displaced since 2012. His mission is to challenge the passive victim narrative, insisting on recognizing refugees as active agents of social change, and exploring complex questions of spaces, belonging, and identities.

LEAP 2026

HUMANIZING CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Conference Programme

Thursday, 5 February

Optional Pre-Conference Social Activities

17.00 Informal meet-up for early arrival - Participants meet at the hotel reception and walk together up to Café Prasini Tenta (Lycabettus Hill) to enjoy sunset views.

19.30 Dinner at Estiatorio Filippou

Friday, 6 February

14.00 Registration

14.45 Welcome Remarks

- Chryssa Mela, Senior Legal and Policy Officer at Fair Trials
- Dara Robinson, Chair of the Fair Trials Board
- Georgios Pyromallis, Defence Lawyer, LEAP Advisory Board Member
- Sveva Franco, Legal and Policy Officer, European Commission Directorate General for Justice and Consumers

LEAP 2026

HUMANIZING CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Conference Programme

Friday, 6 February

15.15 The State of Criminal Justice in Greece

- Tasos Theofilou, journalist, researcher, and author specialising in criminal justice and prisons, Member of the European Impacted Person Advisory Council (EIPAC)
- Thanasis Kampagiannis, Greek Defence Lawyer

Moderator: Chryssa Mela, Senior Legal and Policy Officer at Fair Trials

16.00 Coffe Break

16.30 AI in Criminal Justice: Automating Enforcement or Humanizing Proceedings?

The rapid expansion of AI and data-driven technologies is transforming criminal investigations, evidence-gathering, and cross-border cooperation across Europe, amid a fragmented regulatory landscape and the growing mandate of the EU's law enforcement agency.

This panel will examine how AI-driven investigative tools affect core fair-trial guarantees, including procedural rights, equality of arms, and the defendant's ability to challenge increasingly complex and opaque forms of evidence, with particular attention to cross-border investigations and Europol's expanding use of AI-driven data analysis.

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HUMANIZING CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Conference Programme

Friday, 6 February

Bringing together perspectives from the EU agency on judicial cooperation, civil society, academia, and journalism, the discussion will explore both the systemic risks for defence rights and the potential for AI to humanize criminal justice by reducing intrusive practices, addressing bias, and strengthening safeguards.

- Anna Pivaty, Assistant Professor of Criminal Law and Criminology at Radboud University
- Apostolis Fotiadis, Free Lance Journalist at Solomon
- Romain Lanneau, Legal Researcher at Statewatch
- Vincent Jamin, Administrative Director at Eurojust

Moderator: Gwen Jensen De Wolf, Defence lawyer, Vice-president at the European Criminal Bar Association (ECBA), LEAP Advisory Board Member

18.30 Close of Day 1

18.30 Evening Reception: Dinner & Music

LEAP 2026

HUMANIZING CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Conference Programme

Saturday, 7 February

09.30 Keynote speaker: The future of Criminal Justice

- Margaret Satterthwaite, UN Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers

Opening reflections: The EU policy perspective on the future of criminal justice

- Sveva Franco, Legal and Policy Officer, European Commission Directorate General for Justice and Consumers

11.00 Group Photo & Coffe Break

11.30 Vulnerability, Mental Health, and Poverty: Access to Defence in Europe

This panel examines how the protection of vulnerable suspects lies at the heart of efforts to humanize criminal justice. Drawing on recent European Court of Human Rights case law, it connects access-to-lawyer standards with progressive practice in the United Kingdom, showing how these rights can be protected in practice and what defence lawyers across Europe can learn. Focusing on the cases V.D. v. Croatia and T.V. v. Croatia, the panel discusses police conduct towards persons with mental disabilities and proposals de lege ferenda to ensure compliance with Articles 2 and 3 of the ECHR.

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HUMANIZING CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Conference Programme

Saturday, 7 February

These safeguards are situated within wider, intersectional patterns of vulnerability, including the criminalisation of poverty and its disproportionate impact on women and other marginalised groups. The discussion will also look ahead to emerging questions and priorities for EU-level policymaking in this area.

- Dimitrios Giannoulopoulos, Professor at City St George's University of London, LEAP member
- Jerome Mangelinckx - Global Policy Manager, Penal Reform International
- Laura Stelzer, Legal and Policy Officer, European Commission Directorate General for Justice and Consumers
- Lidija Horvat, Defence Lawyer, LEAP Advisory Board Member

Moderator: Federica Coppola, Assistant Professor of Criminal Law at IE University Law School, Fair Trials Board Member

13.00 Lunch

14.30 Breakout Rooms - 5 Sessions

(Advance registration required. Participants should attend the break-out room assigned to them following registration.)

LEAP 2026

HUMANIZING CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Conference Programme

Saturday, 7 February

14.30 1. Videoconferencing and European Investigation Order

Against the backdrop of the European Commission's upcoming proposal to amend the European Investigation Order, with a focus on videoconferencing, this session will explore the use of videoconferencing in pre-trial and trial hearings in light of Case C-325/24 Bissilli and the overall EIO revision. It will engage LEAP members in a discussion on legal conditions, safeguards, and cross-border challenges rooted in their experiences, with a view to identifying core principles to inform potential future EU rules on remote participation.

Facilitators:

- Alex Tinsley, Senior Legal Consultant at Fair Trials, Barrister
- Michele Panzavolta, Professor of Criminal Law and Cybercrime at the Faculty of Law and Criminology of the KU Leuven

2. Access to a Lawyer

This session will examine the latest national-level trends on the right of access to a lawyer, with a focus on cross-border proceedings. It will also explore the conditions identified by LEAP members for ensuring effective legal assistance in cases

LEAP 2026

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Conference Programme

Saturday, 7 February

of remote participation at trial and pre-trial via videoconferencing, in light of the European Commission's ongoing consultation on this issue.

Facilitators:

- Dimitris Giannoulopoulos, Head of the Department of Law at The City Law School, City St George's, University of London, LEAP member
- Mikołaj Pietrzak, Defence Lawyer, Former Dean of the Warsaw Bar Association, LEAP Advisory Board Member

3. EAW and ne bis in idem

This session will examine recent developments in European Arrest Warrant practice in light of the CJEU's judgment in case C-305/22, which held that a refusal to execute an EAW and the domestic enforcement of a sentence do not preclude the issuing Member State from seeking the person's surrender from another Member State at a later stage. Drawing on national and cross-border experience, the session will engage LEAP members in a discussion on the practical implications for *ne bis in idem*, the risk of multiple proceedings after a refusal of a statute to execute the sentence and the safeguards needed to ensure legal certainty and protect fundamental rights.

LEAP 2026

HUMANIZING CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Conference Programme

Saturday, 7 February

Facilitators:

- Asya Mandzhukova - Stoyanova, Defence Lawyer, LEAP Advisory Board Member
- Vania Costa Ramos, Defence Lawyer, President of the European Bar Association (ECBA), LEAP Advisory Board Member

4. The role of people with lived experience in criminal justice reform

This session will focus on how lived experience can be meaningfully integrated into criminal justice reform, moving beyond symbolic inclusion toward genuine co-creation and shared decision-making. Building on the work of the European Impacted Persons Advisory Council (EIPAC), the session will introduce newly developed internal guidelines aimed at strengthening Fair Trials' engagement with impacted people across its advocacy, research, and policy work. LEAP members will reflect on practical ways to collaborate with EIPAC, particularly on outreach, engagement, and agenda-setting. Participants will be encouraged to share experiences, challenges, and ideas on how lived experience can shape advocacy priorities, public narratives, and reform efforts at both the national and European levels.

LEAP 2026

HUMANIZING CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Conference Programme

Saturday, 7 February

Session facilitated by Fair Trial's European Impacted Advisory Council (EIPAC) members:

- Angelica Vieira, Lawyer
- Elton Kalika, Researcher and Journalist
- Karim Ridwan, Legal Interpreter, Human Rights Activist
- Nuno Pontes, Researcher
- Wael Habbal, refugees right activist, community organizer
- Tasos Theofilou, Journalist, Researcher, and Author specialising in criminal justice and prisons

5. Fair Trials Index Project

This session will introduce the Fair Trials Index, a new global tool developed by Fair Trials and Freshfields to compare how criminal justice systems across countries comply with the right to a fair trial, from arrest to final judgment. Similar in ambition to the Rule of Law Index, it aims to provide clear and comparable data to identify good and poor practices, reveal systemic gaps, and support evidence-based advocacy and reform. The session will engage LEAP members in a hands-on discussion on methodology, indicators, data collection, and impact, and explore how the Index can be used and promoted at national and European levels.

LEAP 2026

HUMANIZING CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Conference Programme

Saturday, 7 February

Facilitators:

- Chryssa Mela, Senior Legal Officer at Fair Trials
- Sophie Rolph, Pro Bono Lawyer at Freshfields

16.00 Coffee Break

16.30 Humanizing the European Arrest Warrant: Prison Conditions Through Case Law and Advocacy

This panel explores the growing tension between the expansive use of the EAW and the evolving legal and human-rights challenges surrounding its implementation in the post-Aranyosi/Căldăraru era. Despite being treated by most Member States as a highly efficient and unquestioned tool, the EAW has generated an overwhelming volume of case law and persistent concerns about detention conditions, proportionality, and the use of alternative cooperation instruments. Drawing on the use of NGO research and monitoring of detention conditions in surrender proceedings, speakers will discuss how such information has been relied upon by courts in several jurisdictions to challenge or suspend extradition where there is a real risk of inhuman or degrading treatment. By examining these issues, the panel focuses on how lawyers, judges, and civil society actors can work together to humanize the application of the EAW.

LEAP 2026

HUMANIZING CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Conference Programme

Saturday, 7 February

Facilitators:

- Alessio Scandurra, Senior Legal Policy officer at Antigone
- Anna Karamoschoglou, Greek Prosecutor at the Court of Appeal
- Cristiana Bianco, Defence Lawyer, LEAP member
- Demetra Sorvatzioti, Professor of Law and Criminology at the University of Limassol, LEAP Advisory Board Member
- Lili Krámer, Senior Programme Officer & Research at Hungarian Helsinki Committee

Moderator: Nuno Pontes, Researcher, Member of the European Impacted Person Advisory Council

18.30 Closing Remarks

- Nicola Canestrini, Defence Lawyer, Advisory Board Member of the European Criminal Bar Association and LEAP Advisory Board Member
- Simona Di Dio, Networks Coordinator at Fair Trials

20.30 Dinner at Taratsa Athens

22.30 Dancing at Discobala

*** These are optional activities that require registration and are self funded. Fair Trials Europe only covers the costs related to the official conference programme.**

LEAP 2026

HUMANIZING CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Participants List

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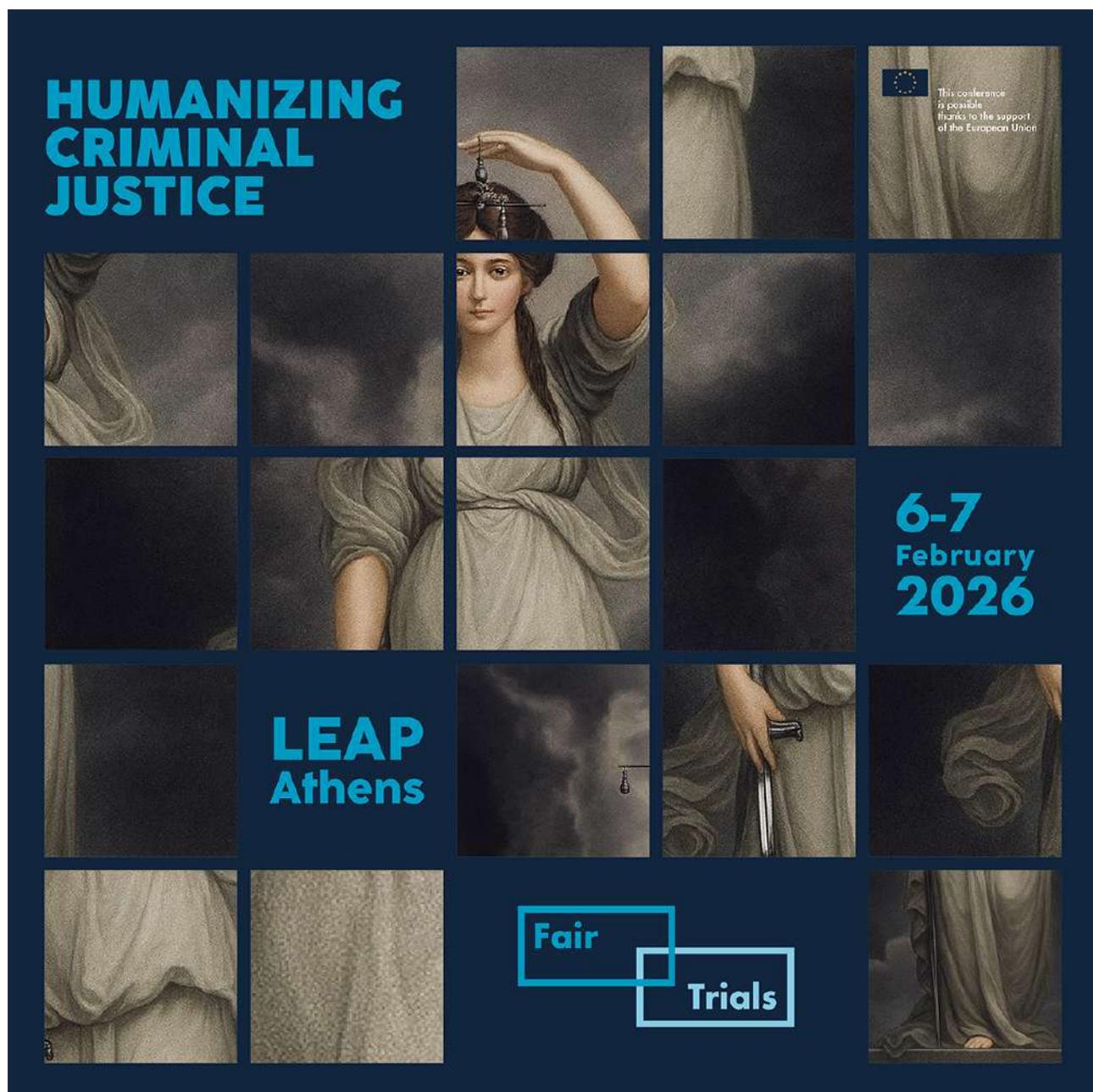
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Communications

We would be pleased if you could share your participation in the conference, whether as a participant or a speaker, on your respective social media platforms.

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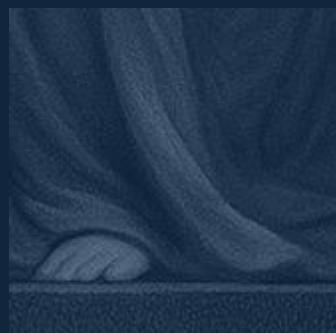
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