

Policy for Cultural Expertise: EURO-EXPERT milestones

Cultural expertise is the special knowledge of experts in laws and cultures, who provide evidence in court and out-of-court dispute resolution and the claim of rights, for the use of the decision-making authority. Cultural expertise must be independent and procedurally neutral: experts must not advocate explicitly or implicitly for a specific legal outcome but can critically affirm their expert opinions.

Who are cultural experts and what do they do?

Cultural experts can clarify the context of facts, explain behaviour, customs, traditions, and local practices. They foster dialogue across disciplines, geographic areas, and social groups in diverse societies and help minority groups to be heard in contexts that are often affected by structural inequalities. The work of cultural expert is valuable in assisting courts in a more balanced decision-making process.

The ethics of cultural expertise

Cultural experts should be cognisant of risks such as the essentialisation of cultures and stigmatisation of vulnerable communities. These risks must be minimised through the sound ethical positioning of cultural experts. Paramount ethics for social scientists are the "do no harm" principle and engagement in support of vulnerable groups, minorities, and First Nations/ Indigenous Peoples/ Aborigines as a service to the communities. Cultural experts' duty is to the court but from a position of independence.

EURO-EXPERT (ERC funded Consolidator grant 681814) - has developed the roadmap of cultural expertise, which includes **six milestones** identifiable with the acronym **AAIIDD**:

Awareness of cultural expertise and cultural experts

Access to experts

Implementation & innovation of existing laws for the appointment of experts

Integrity of experts and the ethics of cultural expertise

Development of cultural expertise skills

Digitalisation for sharing knowledge on cultural expertise

Resources about cultural expertise:

[EURO-EXPERT in-court and out-of-court maps](#)

[CULTEXP](#): the first cross-jurisdictional and multilingual database on cultural expertise

[K-EXP](#): online register of experts and assessment of impact of expert report

[Long Policy on Cultural Expertise](#)



Authors:
Noora Arajärvi
Livia Holden

