

Association Européenne des Magistrats
*Groupe Régional de l'Union
Internationale des Magistrats*



European Association of Judges
*Regional Group of the
International Association of Judges*

Report
EAJ President
Mikael Sjoberg
October 2024 – October 2025

18 October 2024

EAJ -meeting in Cape Town.

In attendance were IAJ President Duro Sessa (the end of the meeting) the EAJ Board, the Honorary Presidents, Christophe Régnard, Gerhard Reissner and Maja Tratnik and delegates from 38 member associations.

At the meeting, 3 resolutions were adopted and there was a good and intense debate with several topics. At the same time the delegations were briefed on current topics including the lawsuit against the Commission and the Council.

The 3 resolutions concerned the wage system in Sweden, where judges for some part of their salary have an individual salary decided by the president of the court, the security and integrity of the electronic voting system for the Supreme Judicial Council in Bulgaria and the misuse of disciplinary procedures against judges in Armenia.

The resolutions can be found on the web site.

29-30 October 2024

Vice President Sabine Matejka attended the meeting at CEPEJ at Strasbourg/Council of Europe.

4 November 2024

ENCJ network.

President Sjoberg attended in the regular on-line meeting of Judicial Network between the presidents of ENCJ, Networks of Presidents of Supreme Courts, ACA and EAJ. The

meeting was chaired by the new elected President of ENCJ, Madeleine Mathieu. On the informal agenda were among other things my summary of the EAJ meeting in Cape Town.

8 November 2024

3rd Conference of the European Forum of Legal Professions, Brussels, on “Improving Justice through Innovation – From Challenges and Needs to Best Practice”; VP Matejka took part in the organization of the event and in the roundtable discussion “what kind of innovations do people expect from the legal professions”. For more information pls see the website of the Forum: <https://euflp.eu/>

The 2nd of December

ENCJ network.

President Sjöberg attended in the regular on-line meeting of Judicial Network between the presidents of ENCJ, Networks of Presidents of Supreme Courts, ACA and EAJ. The meeting was chaired by the President of ENCJ, Madeleine Mathieu. On the informal agenda were among other things the situation in Hungary, Italy and Spain.

3 December 2024

By letter of 3 December 2024 the EAJ Board welcomed the new commissioner, Michael McGrath. In the letter the Board mentioned among other things, that EAJ for four years EAJ has contributed actively to the Rule of Law Report of the European Commission. We expressed our hope that the new Commission takes adequate steps to strengthen the Rule of Law across the EU, including the implementation of the recommendations given in the Rule of Law Reports and that we were look forward to continuing our constructive dialogue with the Commission in this area as in all other areas related to the Rule of Law in the EU.

16 December 2024

EAJ Board meeting. Online.

20 December 2024

In an open letter to the Hungarian Minister of Judges, Bence Tuzon, (the letter can be found on the EAJ website) President Sjöberg expressed his concern about a recent agreement that increased salaries to Hungarian judges were linked to undefined structural reform capable of undermining judicial independence. The EAJ therefore expected that the Hungarian authorities

- immediately provide the judiciary with the long-delayed increase of remuneration to a level which is commensurate with their profession and responsibilities considering the proposals of MABIE, and

- circumstantially and substantially involve the National Judicial Council and the Hungarian Judges Association in all projects and drafts, which aim to reform the justice system.

By letter of **8 January 2025** the minister assured President Sjöberg, that “the Hungarian Government has performed and will continue to perform its work with utmost respect for democratic values, the rule of law, constitutionally and judicial independence”.

13 January 2025

ENCJ Network.

President Sjöberg attended in the regular on-line meeting of Judicial Network between the presidents of ENCJ, Networks of Presidents of Supreme Courts, ACA and EAJ. The meeting was chaired by the President of ENCJ, Madeleine Mathieu. On the informal agenda were among other things the ENCJ Survey on independence, Accountability and Quality.

15 January 2025

Vice President Sabine Matejka took part as a speaker in the Judicial Independence Webinar Series of ELI – European Law Institute, on “Foundations of Judicial Independence”. The series comprises 3 webinars, recordings can be found on ELI website: <https://www.europeanlawinstitute.eu/about-eli/webinars/>

20 January 2025

Following that online event, Vice President Matejka met the President and Secretary General of ELI in Vienna, discussing possible further cooperation with EAJ.

21 January 2025

Vice President Roland Kempfle attended the EJTN Training Assessment Conference in Brussels (online). The conference was preceded by a written consultation. In his contributions Vice President Kempfle included the suggestions he received from several EAJ members. The conference made clear that the EJTN is expected by the European Commission to demonstrate the effectiveness of their legal training and that digitization is crucial both for this purpose, and in relation to training needs of judicial practitioners.

3 February

ENCJ network.

President Sjöberg attended in the regular on-line meeting of Judicial Network” between the presidents of ENCJ, Networks of Presidents of Supreme Courts, ACA and EAJ. The meeting was chaired by the President of ENCJ, Madeleine Mathieu. On the informal agenda were among other things an ENCJ delegation to Hungary and developments in Italy.

3 February

EAJ Board meeting. Online.

5 February 2025

IAJ Presidency Committee. Online.

18 February 2025

Vice President Sabine Matejka visited Bratislava / Slovakia, together with HP Gerhard Reissner, for a meeting with President of the Slovak Judges Associations Frantisek Moznar to discuss ongoing developments in the Slovak judiciary and reform plans of the government.

22 February 2025

Demonstration in Budapest.

IAJ president Duro Sessa and President Sjöberg took part in a demonstration in Budapest organized by MABIE, the Hungarian Association of Judges. Our speeches are reproduced on the IAJ's website.

The demonstration took place under the headline "Demonstration for the Independence of the Judiciary" and the background for the demonstration was "For Judicial Legislation under the Rule of Law", "For freedom of Expression in the Judiciary" and "for a Proper Salary of the Profession".

17 March 2025

EAJ Board meeting. Online.

21 March 2025

Meeting of the members of the European Forum of Legal Profession, Brussels / Vice President Matejka participated online. The topic of the conference 2026 was discussed, working title: "The Need for Constant Vigilance: The Role of the Legal Professions in Maintaining Democratic Values". The conference will be in a hybrid format again, held in Brussels on November 14, 2025.

3 April 2025

Vice President Sabine Matejka participated in the kick-off meeting of a new working group on "work-life balance", initiated by CEPEJ group of Council of Europe. The meeting took place in Paris, where at the same time the CCJE had its meeting, working on an opinion on judicial well-being, so both groups were able to exchange their views in a joint session.

9-11 April 2025

Vice President Sabine Matejka participated in the meeting of CEPEJ and the meeting of pilot courts in Strasbourg / Council of Europe.

17 April 2025

ENCJ- network.

President Sjöberg attended in the regular on-line meeting of Judicial Network between the presidents of ENCJ, Networks of Presidents of Supreme Courts, ACA and EAJ. The meeting was chaired by the President of ENCJ, Madeleine Mathieu. On the informal agenda were among other things ENCJ delegation the ENCJ Survey on independence and the upcoming EAJ meeting in Yerevan.

9 May 2025

EAJ meeting in Yerevan.

The meeting was attended by IAJ President Duro Sessa, HP Gerhard Reisner, Vice President Barone, the EAJ board and 37 delegates.

There was an extensive agenda including written reports from The Working Group on the situation of Member Associations, the Working Group “Ways to Brussels” and the Working Group “Judicial Salaries and Pensions”.

Four resolutions were unanimously adopted.

The first one was about Hungary and dealt with, among other things, judges’ retirement ages and the upcoming judicial reform which had been introduced without having consulted judges or the Hungarian Judges association about its intentions for legal changes concerning the judiciary. The AEJ considered that the development regarding Hungarian Judiciary constitutes a clear setback in the development of the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law in Hungary. .

The second resolution was about Greece and concerned, among other things, disciplinary proceedings against judges. The EAJ urged the competent Greek authorities to stop practice of initiating disciplinary procedures and to re-consider proposal of amendments regarding deadlines in the Civil Procedural Code and corresponding disciplinary regulations which was put forward by the Minister of Justice.

The third resolution was about the Czech Republic where the EAJ urged the Czech authorities to end attempts to reduce or freeze the remuneration of judges and to abide by the decisions of the Constitutional Court and encouraged the Czech Republic to remedy the recently adopted provision suspending the adjustment of judge’s remuneration for 2025.

The fourth resolution was about Italy and was a reiteration of previous resolutions about an impending change of the Italian Constitution with big consequences for the independence of the judiciary. In the resolution the EAJ calls the Italian government to reconsider the course and to abandon the proposed constitutional reform in its current form.

The delegations from Sweden, Spain and Hungary made follow up reports about previous resolutions.

Finally, the plenary unanimously adopted a support letter to the judges in USA expressing their solidarity to the colleagues stating that the role of judges is vital to uphold the rule of law. There is no democracy without a strong and independent judiciary.

Eventually the plenary decided on the further use of the Provident Fund of the EAJ. Justice Thomas Stadelmann (Switzerland) had requested the plenary to decide whether the Provident Fund that was created in 2016 should continue to be used for assisting Turkish judges and their families. The reasons for his requests were explained at the meeting. EAJ Vice President Kempfle provided information on the history and working of the Fund. Since there had been hardly any more requests for three years in a row and not a single request during the last year, the EAJ members decided unanimously to follow Justice Stadelmann's advice.

19 - 20 May 2025

Vice President Sabine Matejka was invited to the EU-conference "New challenges associated with the development of AI and e-communication in the field of justice" in Warsaw/Poland. The conference was organized under the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU. VP Matejka took part in the panel on "How to improve uptake and acceptance of IT and AI tools by the justice professionals".

22 May 2025

ENCJ network.

President Sjoberg attended in the regular on-line meeting of Judicial Network between the presidents of ENCJ, Networks of Presidents of Supreme Courts, ACA and EAJ. The meeting was chaired by the President of ENCJ, Madeleine Mathieu. On the informal agenda were among other things the EAJ meeting in Yerevan.

23 May 2025

Vice President Sabine Matejka was invited by the Cracow Branch of IUSTITIA and the President of the Cracow Regional Court to the "World Day for International Justice" and participated in a panel on efficient courts and case weighting systems.

30 May 2025

EAJ Vice President Roland Kempfle attended an online meeting organized by JOTAY Guatemala on the situation of judicial independence in Latin America and Europe which was also attended by IAJ First Vice President Walter Barone and several delegates of IAJ member associations.

4-6 June 2025

Vice President Kempfle participated at the ENCJ General Assembly in Riga. He was invited to speak opening remarks on behalf of the EAJ. At the end of the General Assembly, the ENCJ adopted unanimously the Riga Declaration on Confronting Threats to Judicial Independence (<https://encj.eu/node/835>).

19 June 2025

Vice President Roland Kempfle is invited to speak at the Hellenic Association of Judges and Prosecutors Conference in Athens. Title of the speech: "Current threats to judicial independence inside and outside of Europe".

13-14 June 2025

Vice President Matejka is member of the ERA Board of Trustees, representing EAJ. She attended the annual meeting in Trier / Germany.

20-21 June 2025

IAJ Presidency Committee. Naples.

8 September 2025

ENCJ network.

President Sjoberg attended in the regular on-line meeting of Judicial Network between the presidents of ENCJ, Networks of Presidents of Supreme Courts, ACA and EAJ. The meeting was chaired by the President of ENCJ, Madeleine Mathieu.

18 September 2025

Vice President Sabine Matejka attended in the Congress of the European Union of Rechtspleger (EUR) at the Place of Justice in Vienna.