

EAJ Working Group on Judicial Salaries and Pensions

Meeting of the EAJ in Baku, October 12th, 2025

Progress Report

During the EAJ meeting in Yerevan on May 9th, 2025, the chair of the Working Group, Ms. Andreea Ciucă, submitted to the assembly the Proposal for an EAJ Statement on Material Independence of Judges and explained the group's sustained efforts to achieve this goal.

The Statement was debated and then voted unanimously by the assembly. It contains 22 standards of material independence of judges, which are minimum standards. They may not be used to reduce existing regulations and nothing should hinder the adoption of solutions which are even better. The Statement is divided into four sections, as follows: I. Necessity of material independence; II. Safeguards to secure material independence; III. Adequate material independence; IV. Adjustment of remuneration or pensions. The Statement also contains an explanatory memorandum.

In the EAJ meeting in Yerevan the assembly welcomed the intention of the next steps in dealing with the important subject, as it was reported in the presentaion of the chair of the Working Group.

As mentioned by the Working Group, it was to continue its work in order to present good practices on judicial salaries and pensions at future EAJ meetings. In this regard, the Working Group took some extra steps to get more responses to the second questionnaire (on good practices), given that only 12 responses had been received from member associations by the time of the meeting in Yerevan. As a result, 21-member associations have so far sent their responses to the Working Group's second questionnaire.

These responses provided valuable information on current practices regarding judicial salaries and pensions. Therefore, a document was drafted to coherently reflect these current practices, taking into account that some were common to several countries and others were specific to only one or a few of them.

During the online meeting of the Working Group on September 22, 2025, it was concluded that the information provided by member associations and included in the document prepared on the basis of this information reflects the current situation in the respective countries rather than containing good practices.

Consequently, the members of the group agreed on a course of action to enable the Working Group to present, at future EAJ meetings, concrete and meaningful examples of good practice in the area of judicial salaries and pensions. In this respect, the members of the Working Group agreed that it is necessary to identify practices that support the material independence of judges, as such good practices can provide member associations with effective tools in their efforts to promote and defend material independence as an important element of judicial independence.

Thus, the Working Group decided, on the one hand, that the document prepared on the basis of the member associations' responses to the second questionnaire should be presented at the EAJ

meeting in Baku. On the other hand, however, it will be specified that this paper does not represent an overview of good practices, but rather an overview of current practices regarding the procedure for establishing/modifying the remuneration scheme for judges and the involvement of the judiciary.

In order for the Working Group to achieve its goals, its members ask member associations to send good practices regarding judicial salaries by the end of November. To this end, the Working Group considers that member associations should take into account the 22 minimum standards contained in the Statement approved at the meeting in Yerevan and highlight which of these standards are covered by good practices and what these practices consist of.

This will enable the Working Group to produce a document that complies with the standards of material independence of judges and serves as a useful tool for member associations.

The group will continue its work in order to present good practices in the field of judicial salaries and pensions at future EAJ meetings (a third questionnaire on judicial pensions will be discussed after the completion of the document on good practices regarding judicial salaries).

It should be noted that the work of the WG and the results achieved so far bear the mark of its members' involvement and their willingness to offer a concrete perspective on the principles that must govern an independent and efficient judicial system in a democratic society.

Andreea Ciucă,
Chair EAJ-Working Group on Judicial Salaries and Pensions