



# The Role of Lawyers in Protecting and Promoting the Rule of Law and Mutual Trust

Training for Defence Lawyers

Zagreb, 1-2 April 2025



EXCELLENCE IN  
**EUROPEAN LAW**

## Speakers

**Ciprian Băban**, Defence Lawyer, Bucharest

**Lorena Bachmaier Winter**, Professor, Complutense University, Madrid

**Vladimir Hrle**, Defence Lawyer, Belgrade, Advisory Board member of the European Criminal Bar Association (ECBA)

**Višnja Drenški-Lasan**, Defence Lawyer, Zagreb

**András Kádár**, Hungarian Helsinki Committee, Budapest

**Holger Matt**, Defence Lawyer, Honorary Professor, Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, Frankfurt

**Mikołaj Pietrzak**, Advocate, Partner at the Pietrzak Sidor & Partners Law Firm, Warsaw

## Key topics

- The rule of law and the essential role of criminal defence lawyers
- Protecting the independence of the legal profession
- The role of lawyers in protecting the independence of the judiciary
- The role of lawyers and the relationship between judges and prosecutors
- The new Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Lawyers
- The need for legal privilege
- Artificial intelligence (AI) challenges to the rule of law

Language  
English

Event number  
325DT16

Organisers  
ERA (Cornelia Riehle) in cooperation with the Croatian Bar Association



# The role of lawyers in protecting and promoting the rule of law and mutual trust

## Tuesday, 1 April 2025

08:45 Arrival and registration of participants

09:00 **Welcome and introduction to the programme**  
*Representative of Croatian Bar Association & Cornelia Riehle (ERA)*

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### PART I: Mutual trust: What role for lawyers?

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*Chair: Cornelia Riehle*

09:05 **What is the rule of law and what is mutual trust?**  
*Lorena Bachmaier Winter*

09:30 **The protection of the rule of law in the EU**  
*András Kádár*

10:00 **The concept of mutual trust in EU criminal law**

- From MLA to mutual recognition
- Gaps of trust as gaps of mutual recognition
- EU procedural rights and safeguards

*Holger Matt*

10:30 Discussion

10:45 Coffee break

*Chair: Mikołaj Pietrzak*

11:15 **The new Convention of the Council of Europe on the Protection of the Rights of Lawyers**

- Scope and content
- Minimum standards and expectations

*Višnja Drenški-Lasan*

11:45 **The role of defence lawyers in criminal proceedings – an essential element of rule of law**

- Different aspects of the role of defence lawyer in criminal proceedings
- Required safeguards for the defence profession as a protection of rule of law in criminal proceedings
- The role of Bar Associations

*Vladimir Hrle*

12:15 **The need to effectively protect legal privileges in EU criminal proceedings**

- Legal professional privilege
- Attorney-client privilege

*Holger Matt*

12:45 Discussion

13:00 Lunch

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### PART II: Practical approaches

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*Chair: Ciprian Băban*

14:00 **The role of lawyers in safeguarding the independence of judges**

- Article 6 (1) ECHR
- The rights of citizens

*Mikołaj Pietrzak*

## Objective

This seminar will focus on the role of lawyers in understanding, protecting and promoting the rule of law and mutual trust, both as defence counsel in criminal proceedings and as a defence profession grouped in bar associations and lawyers' organisations. Participants will have the opportunity to get to know each other and to network with colleagues from across the EU.

## About the Project

Training defence lawyers with special regard to European criminal law has gained more and more importance in recent years. Hence, this seminar is part of a large-scale project co-financed by the European Commission entitled "European Criminal Law for Defence Lawyers". Fifteen interactive, practice-oriented activities will be implemented within this project ranging from face-to-face seminars and conferences to webinars and eLearning courses. For more information, see: <https://training-for-defence.era.int/>

## Who should attend?

Defence lawyers, who are citizens of eligible EU Member States participating in the EU Justice Programme (Denmark does not participate), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\* and Ukraine.

\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

## Venue

Croatian Bar Association  
Koturaška 53  
Zagreb  
Croatia

## CPD

ERA's programmes meet the standard requirements for recognition as Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Participation in the full programme of this event corresponds to **10 CPD hours**. A certificate of participation for CPD purposes with indication of the number of training hours completed will be issued on request. CPD certificates must be requested at the latest 14 days after the event.

- 14:45 Discussion
- 15:00 Coffee break
- 15:30 **The role of lawyers advocating for the rule of law in the context of lawyers' organisations**
- What is out there?
  - How to get involved?
- Vladimir Hrlje*
- 16:30 Discussion
- 16:45 End of first day
- 19:30 Dinner offered by the organisers

## Wednesday, 2 April 2025

### PART III: Challenges to the rule of law posed by Artificial intelligence (AI)

*Chair: Višnja Drenški-Lasan*

- 09:00 **Challenges a lawyer faces in court and AI solutions to overcome them in the context of protecting the rule of law**
- Court transcription and translation practices and AI solutions
  - Access to and studying court files
  - Lawyer-judge / lawyer-clerk Relationship
  - Virtual lawyers and their impact on trust in legal processes
  - Preparation of judicial decisions
- Ciprian Băban*
- 10:00 **Is AI able to replace the human factor in criminal sentencing while safeguarding mutual trust? Pros and cons: discussion with the participants**
- Equal treatment
  - Right to fair trial in the age of automation
  - Privacy issues and trust-building
- Ciprian Băban*
- 10:45 Coffee break
- 11:15 **Panel discussion: Strengthening the rule of law in the EU and the need for additional legal instruments**
- Chair: Holger Matt*  
*Lorena Bachmaier, András Kádár, Mikołaj Pietrzak*
- 12:15 Discussion
- 12:30 Closing  
*Cornelia Riehle*
- 12:45 End of seminar

For programme updates: [www.era.int](http://www.era.int)  
Programme may be subject to amendment.



Times indicated refer to the local time  
in Zagreb

### Your contacts



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### Save the date

**Annual Conference on White-Collar Crime in the EU 2025**  
Trier & online, 20-21 March 2025

**Annual Conference on EU Border Management 2025**  
Trier & online, 10-11 April 2025

**Summer Course on European Criminal Justice**  
Online, 23-27 June 2025

Apply online for "The role of lawyers in protecting and promoting the rule of law and mutual trust":

[www.era.int/?133498&en](http://www.era.int/?133498&en)



Co-funded by the European Union.

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# Application

## The role of lawyers in protecting and promoting the rule of law and mutual trust

Zagreb, 1-2 April 2025 / Event number: 325DT16

### Terms and conditions of participation

#### Selection

1. Participation is only open to lawyers in private practice from eligible EU Member States (Denmark does not participate in this EU Justice Programme), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\* and Ukraine.

The number of open places available is limited (10 places). Participation will be subject to a selection procedure. Selection will be according to professional eligibility, nationality and then "first come, first served".

Interested defence lawyers from Croatia should apply via the Croatian Bar Association.  
Interested defence lawyers from Hungary should apply via the Budapest Bar Association.  
Interested defence lawyers from Latvia should apply via the Latvian Council of Sworn Advocates.  
Interested defence lawyers from Lithuania should apply via the Lithuanian Bar Association.  
Interested defence lawyers from Portugal should apply via the Portuguese Bar Association.  
Interested defence lawyers from Spain should apply via ICAB.

2. Applications should be submitted before **15 February 2024**.
3. A response will be sent to every applicant after this deadline. **We advise you not to book any travel or hotel before you receive our confirmation.**

#### Registration Fee

4. €110 including documentation, coffee breaks, lunch and dinner.

#### Travel and Accommodation Expenses

5. Participants will receive a fixed contribution towards their travel and accommodation expenses and are asked to book their own travel and accommodation. **The condition for payment of this contribution is to sign all attendance sheets at the event.** The amount of the contribution will be determined by the EU unit cost calculation guidelines, which are based on the distance from the participant's place of work to the seminar location and will not take account of the participant's actual travel and accommodation costs.
6. Travel costs from outside Croatia: participants can calculate the contribution to which they will be entitled on the European Commission website (<https://era-comm.eu/go/calculator>, table 2). The distance should be calculated from their place of work to the seminar location.
7. For those travelling within Croatia, the contribution for travel is fixed at €36 (for a distance between 50km and 399 km). Please note that no contribution will be paid for travel under 50km one-way. For more information, please consult p.10 on <https://era-comm.eu/go/unit-cost-decision-travel>
8. Accommodation costs: International participants will receive a fixed contribution of €104 per night for up to two nights' accommodation. National participants travelling more than 50km one-way will receive a fixed contribution of €104 per night for one night accommodation. For more information, please consult p.14 on <https://era-comm.eu/go/unit-cost-decision-travel>.
9. These rules do not apply to representatives of EU Institutions and Agencies who are required to cover their own travel and accommodation.
10. Successful applicants will be sent the relevant claim form and information on how to obtain payment of the contribution to their expenses. Please note that no payment is possible if the registered participant cancels their participation for any reason.

#### Participation

11. Participation at the whole seminar is required and participants will be asked to sign attendance sheets daily.
12. A list of participants including each participant's address will be made available to all participants unless ERA receives written objection from the participant no later than one week prior to the beginning of the event.
13. The participant will be asked to give permission for their address and other relevant information to be stored in ERA's database to provide information about future ERA events, publications and/or other developments in the participant's area of interest.
14. A certificate of attendance will be sent electronically after the seminar.

#### Hotel recommendations

15. ERA neither provides nor endorses local accommodation recommendations. Kindly consult available online booking platforms.

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[www.era.int/?133498&en](http://www.era.int/?133498&en)

#### Venue

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#### Language

English

#### Contact

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