

EAJ President Report

Since the EAJ meeting in Taiwan there has been a lot of activity in the EAJ presidency. To a large extent, we have divided the tasks between us. Below is an overview of the most important activities.

October 2nd

President Sjoberg attended in the regular on-line meeting of “Judicial Network” between the presidents of ENCJ, Networks of Presidents of Supreme Courts and IACA. The meeting was chaired by the newly elected President of ENCJ, Dalia Vaserienne.

On the informal agenda were among other things my summary of the EAJ meeting in Taiwan.

October 11-12

President Sjoberg participated in the annual meeting in the Slovakian Judges Association. The annual meeting included vetting, among other things. Sjoberg had a presentation where he among other things discussed EAJ´s resolution from Taipei on Moldova. Gerhard Reissner and Bogdan Jedrys were also present, both of whom spoke on the same topic.

At the meeting there were representatives from the Austrian, Czech, Polish and Hungarian associations.

October 13

Vice President Sabine Matejka participated in the annual congress of the French Union Syndicale des Magistrats (USM), on October 13, 2023, at the Cour d’appel de Paris. The topic of this year’s meeting was “Justice et medias : regards croisés”. In the afternoon she participated in a seminar at the French Court of Cassation on case weighting systems, organized by CEPEJ / CoE.

October 25

JOTAY, an organisation based in Guatemala that works with several organisations of judges in Central America, asked Vice President Kempfle if the German Judges Association (DRB) would co-host a conference for Judges from Central America and Europe in Berlin in September 2024. After consulting with the IAJ Presidency Committee, especially First Vice President Barone (Grupo IBA), Vice President Kempfle met JOTAY’s representative Johanna van Strien online on 25th October to discuss the possible involvement of IAJ in the conference. The suggestion was welcomed, so it can be expected that IAJ will be involved in JOTAY’s conference in 2024.

October 20-21

In the course of a joint conference of the Austrian, German and Swiss branches of Commission of Jurists in Lucerne, Switzerland, VP Matejka established contacts with the new General Secretary of International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), Santiago Canton, who was very interested in the work of IAJ/EAJ and future cooperation. This will be followed up by President of IAJ, Duro Sessa.

November 8

President Sjoberg participated at the invitation of Justitia in a team meeting with a number of parliamentarians from the European Parliament. At the meeting, the situation after the recent election in

Poland was discussed and it was discussed whether political initiatives should be taken. For the time being the situation would be monitored.

November 17

Vice President Kempfle met Ms Ingrid Derveaux, General Secretary of the EJTN (European Judicial Training Network) in Brussels to discuss possibilities of cooperation between EJTN and EAJ, including – but not limited to – the judges@europe forum Ms Derveaux would be very happy about a cooperation between EJTN and EAJ on an institutional level. The EAJ board agreed to invite Ms Derveaux to the next EAJ Meeting in Warsaw which would involve no costs for EAJ since EJTN could cover her travel costs.

November 24-25

The EAJ board met in Vienna to discuss the EAJ work in 2023/2024, especially the lawsuit at the ECJ, the EAJ Meeting in Warsaw on 25 April 2024, the organisation of work within the new EAJ board. The board decided to meet every month on teams.

November 29

President Sjoberg and Vice President Kempfle participated in the online meeting with Carsten Zatschler and representatives of the other organizations (AEAJ, MEDEL and Judges for Judges) that joined the lawsuit regarding Poland at the ECJ.

November 30

Vice President Matejka represents EAJ in the Expert Group of EU Commission on European Judicial Training (previously this was done by José Matos). She was invited to a workshop in Brussels on Nov 30, to follow-up the European Judicial Training Strategy 2021 – 2024 and discuss the post 2024 Judicial Training Strategy, which will focus on digital transition and its impact on judicial training.

December 1st

On Dec 1, the European Forum of Judicial Professions held its 2nd hybrid conference in Brussels, organised with the support of ERA. The topic of the conference was “The Media and the Legal Professions: Trust in the Judiciary Requires Trust in the Media”. Vice President Matejka moderated the Roundtable discussion on the image of justice in media reports. The conference was very successful, with more than 400 participants registered for online-participation. Other representatives of the members of the Forum, such as President of ENCJ, were also present on-site. Dorota Zabłudowska from Polish Association IUSTITIA shared her experiences in the roundtable discussion on the common interests of journalists and legal professionals in a rule-of-law crisis. More information on the Forum can be found on its new website: <https://euflp.eu>.

December 4th

At the regular on-line meeting of Judicial Network (EAJ, ENCJ, Network of Presidents of the Supreme Courts, IACA) it was announced that that the president of Network of Presidents of the Supreme Courts, Ms Bettina Limperg had stepped down after being President of the Network for 5 years. Her successor, Mr. Anders Eka, Sweden, was introduced at meeting. On the informal agenda was, among other things the relation to the European Commission. President Sjoberg proposed that the group initiate a meeting with Commissioner Reynders as before. There was a strong support for this.

December 6

At its meeting in Vienna, the board decided to hold monthly online meetings. This was the first meeting. At the meeting, it was agreed to meet in January online with parts of the board from Justitia in order to organize the EAJ meeting in Warsaw in April 2024.

December 4

President Sjoberg attended in the regular web meeting of Judicial Networks between the president of ENCJ, Dalia Vasariene, the President of the Network of the Presidents of the Supreme Courts, Anders Eka and the President of ACA, Kari Kuusuniemi. Dalia Vasariene welcomed the President of the Swedish Suprema Court, Anders Eka in the group.

December 15

IAJ Presidency Committee meeting (online)

January 8

President Sjoberg attended in the regular web meeting of Judicial Networks between the presidents of ENCJ, the Network of the Presidents of the Supreme Courts and ACA.

On the agenda was the IAJ initiative proposing January 11.the Day of independent Judiciary.

January 10

EAJ - board web meeting between Vice President Sabine Matejka, Vice President Roland Kempfle and President Sjoberg. On the agenda was the coming EAJ meeting in Warsaw.

January 17

Vice President Kempfle attended an online meeting with JOTAY (Guatemala), FECAJUD and other actors to discuss the preparation of a conference for Central American and European Judges which will be hosted by JOTAY and co-hosted by DRB and IAJ in Berlin from 9-13 September 2024.

January 22

A web meeting between the EAJ board and representatives from board of Justitia, amongst others President Krystian Markiewicz and Dorota Zabłudowska. On the agenda was the coming meeting in Warsaw in April.

January 23

Vice President Kempfle attended online the annual "Training Needs Assessment" conference of the EJTN.

January 24

A web meeting between policy officer Joze Strus, EU Commission and the president of IAJ, Duro Sessa, the chair of the Working Group on the Situation in Member States, Stephan Gass, HP Gerhard Reisner, President Sjoberg and Vice President Sabine Matejka. On the agenda was the EAJ response to the Consultation Questionnaire by the EU Commission for the preparation of the

Report on the Rule of Law 2024. The response was based on questionnaires from the member associations processed by the working group.

January 26

President Sjoberg attended the first meeting of the members interesting in joining the future Working Group on Judicial Salaries and Pensions. The meeting was chaired by Gerhard Reissner. At the meeting, the members discussed a number of general views and principles for the group's work. The group agreed to postpone the election of the chairperson to the meeting in Warsaw.

January 30

Vice President Kempfle attended a follow-up online meeting with JOTAY (Guatemala) on the preparation of a conference for Central American and European Judges in Berlin from 9-13 September 2024.

February 5

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

February 8

EAJ- board meeting online.

February 10

Vice President Matejka attended the Congress of International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) "Independence of Judges and Lawyers around the world" (online)

March 4

President Sjoberg attended in the regular meeting of Judicial Networks between the presidents of ENCJ, the Network of the Presidents of the Supreme Courts and ACA. At the meeting President Dalia Vasariene invited the network to ENCJ's 30th anniversary in Rome in June 2024.

March 4

Vice President Kempfle attended a meeting of the IAJ Presidency Committee with the UN Special Rapporteur on Judicial Independence, Prof Margret Satterthwaite, on the proposal to introduce an "International Day of Judicial Independence" on 11 January. The meeting was attended by IAJ President Duro Sessa and the Presidential Committee.

March 4-5

Vice President Matejka participated in the workshop with Presidents of pilot courts, held in Mostar/Bosnia, organized by Council of Europe (CEPEJ project "Strengthening the Quality and Efficiency of Justice in Bosnia and Herzegovina")

March 11

Vice President Matejka attended the Fundamental Rights Forum 2024 in Vienna, organized by EU Agency for Fundamental Rights

March 19

EAJ board meeting online

March 20

President Sjoberg signed with President of The Association of European Administrative Judges (AEAJ), Sylvian Mérenne, President of Judges for Judges, Tamara Trotman and President of MEDEL, Mariarosaria Guglielmi a letter to the Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatovic´ and European Commissioner for Justice, Didier Reynders expressing our strong concerns about the situation of the judiciary in Bulgaria where - even recently - cases of judges exposed to pressure and intimidating conduct in connection with the exercise of their professional duties have been reported. The letter is on the website of IAJ.

March 20

EAJ- board meeting online.

March 27

Online meeting with partner associations of judges and their lawyers on the pending law suits (Poland)