

Report
on participation in the ENCJ General Assembly in Ljubljana
7-9 June 2023

First of all, once again, I sincerely thank you for trusting me to represent EAJ at GA ENCJ.

EAJ/IAJ is a highly respected organization and they are very keen to continue their cooperation in ENCJ.

I am also conveying the warm greetings of the President, Mrs. Valeriene, with an expression of sincere respect for the EAJ and You personally and the wish for further excellent cooperation between the two organizations in the protection of the independence of the judiciary in Europe.

Upon express request, I also briefly addressed the general assembly of ENCJ on behalf of EAJ and You personally in the introduction.

At the plenary session, the results of the projects taking place in 2022-2023 were reported:

- independence, responsibility and quality of the judiciary,
- code of ethics for judicial councils,
- digital justice and
- how to ensure the attractiveness of a judicial career.

The judicial councils of BiH, Moldova and Ukraine were accepted as new observers of the ENCJ.

In the following, two guests gave longer presentations:

Jaša Vrabec VS RS and CEPEJ – Courts prepared for the future and Ben Wilson UK – Court communication and openness in support of the rule of law.

Work followed - discussion in groups - regarding all four topics - projects discussed in ENCJ for the last two years, which did not end with conclusions or recommendations.

On the second day, three projects of positive changes were first presented, competing with each other:

1. The Danish Judicial Council presented a questionnaire - a game to learn about the work of lay judges
2. The Romanian Judicial Council presented the judicial council transparency project developed within the EU POCA project and
3. The UK Judicial Council presented the way the Judicial Council and courts communicate with the public

Based on a secret ballot, the Romanian project won. (The EU co-financed it with EUR 5 million).

This was followed by reports on working group discussions - without conclusions.

CONCLUSIONS:

they accepted:

- ENCJ work report in 2022 and 2023,
- ENCJ work plan in 2023 and 2024,
- Code of ethics for members of judicial councils and
- ENCJ Ljubljana declaration - support for efforts for independence, including the regulation of the salary situation - the text was coordinated until the end - it will be published on the ENCJ website.

Several guests were invited to the session of the ENCJ General Assembly. Among them is the new general secretary of EJTN, Ingrid Derveaux, who would very much like to meet with You regarding further cooperation between EJTN and EAJ and with You personally - as a lecturer. I promised her that I would forward her e-mail address to you: Ingrid.Derveaux@ejtn.eu.

She also asked me to forward the invitation to participate in the judges' forum, which I am sending in the next e-mail, and she asks if you – IAJ secretariat could send it to all the members of the EAJ judges' associations and they among judges, as they want as wide a participation as possible.

The European Commission DG JUST was represented by Jože Štrus, who provided full support to EAJ in further efforts for the independence of the judiciary. The European Commission will continue to closely monitor the situation in individual countries, so it asks for regular updates. The EU Scoreboard was also published on Thursday 8 June 2023, and the Rule of Law Report will probably be published before the end of the month.

Kranj, 10 June 2023

Janja Roblek