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Special Focus : *the Artificial Intelligence Act*

Interview of Jiří Novák, Chair of the CCBE IT Law Committee

What is the Artificial Intelligence Act proposal?

Legally speaking, it is the proposal for a regulation laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence. Also called the Artificial Intelligence Act, or AIA as abbreviated. In terms of the scope, it is a general regulation that aims to cover all legal aspects of artificial intelligence in a similar way the well-known General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) does.

The AIA intends to regulate a whole new area of human activity. Or should I say an area of artificial intelligence activity? Artificial intelligence does exist, although not yet to the extent that many of us imagine based on so many science fiction movies. With the AIA, I think that lawmakers are keeping up better than usual with the technological developments and the European Commission is not the only organisation working on ways to govern artificial intelligence. The [Council of Europe](#) - and especially its [CAHAI committee](#) - is also studying the possible legal framework for artificial intelligence. The CCBE is a member of this committee and the CCBE IT law committee is monitoring its development.

The Artificial Intelligence Act proposal remains at the forefront of the European legislative developments in AI.



Jiří Novák, Chair of the CCBE IT Law Committee

Which impact could the Artificial Intelligence Act have on justice?

We live in times when we can see quite an extraordinary circumstance. The development of technology is giving rise to a new right that did not exist before. Or one could say that it did exist, but it was never necessary to define it. That is the right to a human judge.

I am speaking, of course, about ideas that are not coming any time soon, but we are here today, as I mentioned a moment ago, defining the conditions under which AI is to operate. And the discussions we are having - not only at the CCBE - in shaping the basic principles of AI, have shown how easy it is to surrender to the notion that AI can adjudicate legal disputes. It is easy to imagine that it will adjudicate them far more quickly and perhaps even better, for example by excluding the individual, perhaps peculiar, worldview of a judge.

In factually and legally simple matters, such as parking tickets or speeding tickets, the idea of AI decision-making may not be so worrying. After all, many European cities and Member States already process these offences using

automation and algorithms. Perhaps artificial intelligence is too big a hammer to deal with these processes. I mention this as an example because at the other end of this idea is litigation, whether civil or criminal, which requires not only interpretation of a complex set of evidence, but also careful legal evaluation once the facts of the case are established.

Perhaps sometime in the future, there will be artificial intelligence that can properly establish the facts based on the evidence available and evaluate the law accordingly. But the question we are trying to answer is rather philosophical and twofold.

Firstly, the current perception of artificial intelligence is that its decision-making is based on past experience, i.e. on the data that it has learned to interpret. Life brings many new situations, and thus the law, which must respond to them, is evolving as well. The system of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms is a good example. Since its inception, the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Convention have evolved in response to the development of our civilisation. For example, the interpretation of the concept of 'correspondence' in the context of the right to privacy is much broader today than it was when the Convention's authors imagined it more than seventy years ago. [The Convention is a living instrument](#) and only time will tell whether artificial intelligence will be able to

take a similar approach to interpret the law.

The second level is more crucial if the AI itself would be able to shape the law by interpretation. At its basic stage, the judicial decision-making is nothing more than an assessment of the conformity of actions with moral rules of behaviour that are enshrined in the law and further interpreted (the continental system of law) or established by the very decisions of judges (the common law system). In this way, judges influence society and steer the desired behaviour of its members. If we leave this to artificial intelligence by allowing it to judge, then the moral rules of human behaviour will no longer be determined by humans, but by artificial intelligence. Does humankind want to be subordinated to machines? I think not, and perhaps I am not alone in my opinion, and the right to a human judge is fast becoming an important part of the debate over the role of artificial intelligence in the justice system and the principle of a fair trial.

To answer the question, I do not believe that lawmakers will let Artificial Intelligence decide in court matters. However, the need to streamline the judicial process will lead to the use of artificial intelligence whenever possible, for example in the analysis of the applicable case law. Even the current studies on artificial intelligence show that its development and use need to follow strict principles, such as the principle of explainability. This will also apply in the use of artificial intelligence in justice.

What is the CCBE position on this proposal?

The role of the CCBE has always been to protect the rule of law, democratic values, and human rights. This is no different in the scope of work of the IT Law Committee, which includes artificial intelligence and its regulation. After all, the [CCBE position paper](#) on the Artificial Intelligence Act, which was approved by the Standing Committee in October this year, is not the only or even the first CCBE paper on artificial intelligence. The CCBE IT Law Committee has been working on this issue for a long time, and the position can be seen, for example, in the [comments](#) on the communication on the digitalisation of Justice in the EU, in the [response](#) to the consultation on the European Commission White Paper on Artificial Intelligence as well as in its own [considerations](#) on the legal aspects of Artificial Intelligence.

Thus, it is of no surprise that the CCBE's latest position paper emphasises the respect for the fundamental values inherent to the legal profession and the principle of a fair trial, including lawyer-client confidentiality. It also emphasises the right to a human judge, which I explained earlier. In the areas where AI would find its application, we insist on the fulfilment of transparency and explainability of AI and other ethic principles of AI. Through the work of the CCBE Migration Committee, we draw attention to the need for a moratorium on the use of automated technologies in border and migration control until they are independently assessed for compliance with international human rights standards. We have also not forgotten the need to regulate liability for artificial intelligence, which still awaits detailed discussion.

It is important to say that the CCBE is not alone with its position. In parallel to the presentation of the Artificial Intelligence Act, the LIBE Committee of the European Parliament drafted a [resolution on Artificial intelligence in criminal law and its use by the police and judicial authorities in criminal matters](#), which was adopted just a few days before the CCBE position. This resolution is of paramount importance in the next steps of the legislative process. In fact, the Parliament's view is in line with the CCBE position, even though its focus lies in criminal matters. The resolution recognises the necessity for artificial intelligence applications for law enforcement and the judiciary to fully respect the right to a fair trial, the rights of the defence and equality of arms. MEPs call for the ban of several AI tools, such as the use of artificial intelligence that could result in mass surveillance, the use of AI and related technologies

for proposing judicial decisions or the use of AI for predictive policing and for automated analysis and/or recognition in publicly accessible spaces of other human features.

What is the state of play and the next steps of the legislative process?

Regarding the next steps on the artificial intelligence act itself, it follows the ordinary legislative procedure. Within the European parliament, the Rapporteur of the IMCO Committee, in charge of this legislative file, will prepare a draft report in the coming months with amendments to the proposal. This report and amendments tabled by MEPs will be discussed and eventually approved by the Committee and the Plenary. Within the Council of the EU, a general approach will be prepared at technical

and political levels. The inter-institutional negotiations ("trilogues") between the European Parliament and the Council are expected to take place based on the European Parliament and the Council's general approach. During the trilogues, both institutions will aim to reach an agreement on the proposal for it to be adopted.

The CCBE IT law committee keeps monitoring the legislative process and plans to respond to the developments in line with the CCBE positions.

Finally, let me note that the answers have been translated from their original language to English using an AI-powered translation tool. AI is here.

CCBE position paper on the Artificial Intelligence Act

In its position paper adopted on 8 October 2021, the CCBE calls upon the EU institutions to adopt specific provisions on the use of AI in the field of Justice. The CCBE considers that the entire decision-making process must remain a human-driven activity and human judges must be required to take full responsibility for all decisions. A right to a human judge should be guaranteed at all stages of the proceedings. Furthermore, the CCBE stresses that the proposal should exclude the use of AI tools which may infringe a person's fundamental rights, such as predictive policing. The principles of transparency and explainability must be strictly observed when AI is used by law enforcement authorities. The proposal must contain a clear prohibition regarding social scoring and automated recognition of human features in publicly accessible spaces. It should limit uses and applications of AI systems violating access to social rights and benefits. There should be a ban or moratorium on the use of automated technologies in border and migration control until they are independently assessed for compliance with international human rights standards. Moreover, the CCBE underlines that specific provisions should be adopted on AI liability issues.

European Lawyers' Day 2021

#ELD2021

European Lawyers' Day (ELD) is celebrated each year on 25 October to highlight the common values of lawyers and their intrinsic role in the defence and promotion of the rule of law, as well as their contribution to the justice system. ELD is organised in the framework of the **European Day of Justice**, a day created to bring justice closer to citizens and to promote the work of the Council of Europe and the European Commission in the field of justice. The European Day of Justice aims to inform citizens about their rights and strengthen confidence in judicial systems as much as it helps to familiarise citizens with new developments in the legal profession.

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European Lawyers' Day is an important momentum to highlight lawyers' irreplaceable role in the justice system and in the defence and promotion of the rule of law.

Justice cannot function properly without independent lawyers and bars. Lawyers' independence is a prerequisite to properly defend clients, including in their actions against the State, to build trust between lawyers and their clients, to preserve the rule of law and to fulfil lawyers' crucial role to prevent the abuse of powers.

Margarete von Galen
CCBE President



No justice without independent lawyers!

The ELD theme this year was **“No justice without independent lawyers”**. The independence of lawyers and bars is an essential element for the legal profession to carry out its mission to properly defend citizens, including in their actions against the State, to build trust between lawyers and their clients, to preserve the rule of law and to fulfil the important and irreplaceable role to prevent the abuse of powers. It is also an opportunity to shed light on the attacks on lawyers which are often related to identification with their clients or client's causes. Nowadays, lawyers are still being harassed, threatened,

identified with their clients, arrested, prosecuted, and even murdered because of their professional activity, including in Europe. ELD 2021 was also an opportunity to reiterate the need for a binding European Convention on the Profession of Lawyer in order to preserve the independence of the legal profession, the integrity of the administration of justice, and the rule of law.

On this occasion, several events were organised by various Bars and Law societies that can be consulted in the [CCBE webpage](#) as well as in the [Council of Europe website](#).

The need for a European Convention on the profession of lawyer



A specific event was moreover organised by the CCBE: an online roundtable entitled “A binding legal instrument on the legal profession: A necessity for the proper administration of justice and the respect of the rule of law”. Based on the findings of the [feasibility study](#) on “a new, binding or non-binding, European legal instrument on the profession of lawyer - Possible added-value and effectiveness” which was prepared by Jeremy MacBride under the auspice of the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ), the aim of the roundtable was to bring together representatives of the Council of Europe, lawyers and representatives of lawyers’ organisations to discuss the need for a European Convention on the legal profession. This event gathered 120 participants.

More information on the roundtable are available on the [CCBE website](#).

The roundtable started with an introductory speech by the CCBE President, Margarete von Galen, who underlined the CCBE’s strong support for a binding new legal instrument on the profession of lawyer. She referred in this regard to the [CCBE position adopted on 8 October 2021](#) which reiterates that there are compelling reasons for adopting a new binding legal instrument on the profession of lawyer. Firstly, it would provide both national jurisdictions and the European Court of Human Rights with new additional specific legal provisions to which they could refer in cases concerning the legal profession. Secondly, such a new binding legal instrument would be accompanied by an implementation mechanism which could consist in a complaint mechanism with a body with the responsibility for ruling on individual or collective complaints about non-compliance with the standards set out in the instrument, or alternatively in a system of periodic reports by the Member States of the Council of Europe, subject to input from lawyers, bars, law societies and their international associations, such as the CCBE, with the possibility of a recommendation by the Committee of Ministers.

Her intervention was then followed by the keynote speech of the Director of the Council of Europe Human Rights Directorate, Christophe Poirel, who recalled that *“the freedom of exercise of the profession of lawyer is indispensable for the full implementation of the fundamental right to a fair trial as guaranteed by Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights. It is undeniable that the adoption of a future legal instrument in this field, allowing for a better protection of lawyers in the exercise of their profession, would contribute to the strengthening of democracy, the rule of law and human rights which are the very essence of the Council of Europe.”*

A discussion moderated by Laurent Pettiti, Chair of CCBE European Convention Working Group, then took place between the participants and Christoph Henrichs, Vice-Chair of the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ), Frédéric Krenc, Judge at the European Court of Human Rights, and Diego García-Sayán, the UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers.

During his presentation, the Vice-Chair of the CDCJ stated that *“a new European instrument should set out the standards in a manner that is both more precise and more comprehensive. This, binding or non-binding, legal instrument would be a step forward for both lawyers and their clients provided that the level of law and protection is higher than the existing one and that Member States agree to its application.”*

Frédéric Krenc, Judge at the European Court of Human Rights, insisted on the crucial role of lawyers in defending the rights of citizens and the rule of law, confirming the special status of the lawyer as an actor of justice who therefore requires special protection both inside and outside the courtroom.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers reiterated his strong support for a binding new legal instrument on the profession of lawyer and underlined that it would be crucial that this future Convention, if adopted, is also open to countries which are not Member States of the Council of Europe. He also stressed the important work carried out by the CCBE in support of endangered lawyers worldwide and that he very much values the excellent cooperation created between him and the CCBE.

The event was concluded with closing remarks by the Senator and Russian Federation representative at the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), Aleksandr Bashkin, who first stressed that in order to build public confidence in the rule of law and equality before the law, all Council of Europe member states have an obligation to guarantee the free exercise of the legal profession, which includes guaranteeing the lawyer's professional rights such as ensuring timely access of a lawyer to his/her client, securing the principle of confidentiality, and ensuring non-interference in the legitimate professional activities of lawyers. He then concluded by recalling the recommendation made by the PACE calling for the adoption of a European Convention on the profession of lawyer given that the existing legal instrument protecting certain rights related to the profession of lawyer, although useful, have not generated the necessary conditions for effective accountability of States and non-State actors due notably to their non-binding nature.

Main CCBE events & activities

Digital Justice Ministerial Forum

The CCBE President, Margarete von Galen, participated in the Digital Justice Ministerial Forum on 12 October 2021, hosted by the European Commission. The Forum focused on the digital transition of justice systems in the EU, highlighting the challenges and opportunities in this area. The CCBE president intervened in a session dedicated to the overall EU approach to digitalisation in light of the general principles and needs of society and various legal professions. She shared her views on the impact of new digital technologies and Artificial intelligence on the access to justice as well as on the quality of the justice system.



High-level policy dialogue “How to secure compliance with the Rule of law?”



On 15 October 2021, the CCBE President participated in the high-level policy dialogue “How to secure compliance with the Rule of law?” organised by the School of Transnational Governance in Florence, Italy. A prominent number of participants, including Věra Jourová (Vice-President of the European Commission), exchanged views on topics such as judicial independence, media pluralism, and COVID-19 related measures.

Conference on Fundamental rights and the rule of law

On 4 November 2021, the CCBE Secretary-General, Simone Cuomo, participated in the panel discussion on Justice during a conference on “Fundamental rights and the rule of law – Civil society perspectives on the European Rule of Law Mechanism” organised by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC). He stressed that the rule of law cannot exist without access to justice, and lawyers are key in ensuring access to justice by helping persons to assert and enforce their rights when they are being violated. The role of Bars and Law Societies to guarantee lawyers' independence and professional integrity is, therefore, a crucial component of the rule of law which requires constant protection.



CCBE October Standing Committee



After more than a year and a half of online meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CCBE held a presential Standing Committee on 8 October in Brussels. The main topics on the agenda included the adoption of the CCBE positions on the [Anti-Money Laundering legislative package](#), on the [Artificial Intelligence Act](#), on the need for a [European Convention on the profession of lawyer](#), as well as on the consultation on the [evaluation of the Victims' Rights Directive](#) (See further details on the adopted position papers hereafter). The CCBE furthermore unanimously adopted a [statement](#) expressing its deep concern with respect to the ruling of the Polish Constitutional Tribunal (case nr. K13/21 dated 7 October 2021) stating that accepting European Law over Polish Law is incompatible with Polish Constitution. In its statement, the CCBE reiterated that all EU member states must respect signed treaties and rulings of the Court of Justice of the European Union and restated that EU values and principles must be equally applied.

The CCBE was also delighted to welcome Emmanuel Crabit, Director of Fundamental rights and rule of law, DG JUST, European Commission, who presented the [2021 Rule of law Report](#) and the [EU Justice Scoreboard](#). Mr Crabit thanked the CCBE for its contribution and support in gathering the information for both reports. He highlighted that the Rule of Law Report recognises the importance of lawyers for an effective and independent justice system. He also responded to a range of questions and views expressed by CCBE members on the report.

CCBE views on the evaluation of the Victims' Rights Directive

In October 2021, the CCBE adopted and submitted [its response to the public consultation entitled "Supporting crime victims – evaluation of the Victims' Rights Directive"](#). In its contribution, the CCBE considers that the Directive was a positive step towards ensuring victims' rights. Regarding further potential improvements, it is stressed that the inclusion of the term "alleged victim" in addition to the term "victim" could be envisaged in order to find the right balance between procedural rights for victims and those recognised for accused persons. Moreover, the contribution proposes that victims' rights could be strengthened with regards to the right to interpretation and translation, the right to receive information about one's case, and the right to legal aid. Among other points highlighted by the CCBE were the right of the victims and/or their lawyers to access and copy the criminal case file and a better consideration of the role of lawyers.

CCBE Workshop to enhance the cooperation between Bars



On 7 October, the EU Lawyers committee organised a workshop entitled “How to enhance the cooperation between Bars”. The idea of the workshop was to organise a working level exchange for local, regional, and national Bars and indicate how the cooperation between Bars should work. The workshop was opened and moderated by Joanna Wiśła-Płonka, Chair of the EU Lawyers Committee, and focused on three topics presented by three CCBE experts: Carlo Forte, Luc Vanheeswijck, and Stéphanie Alves. Each presentation was followed by a Q&A session. The following topics were discussed: 1) Administrative cooperation in the TFEU and the different cooperation systems in force (IMI, Solvit, etc.); 2) Cooperation between national Bars in the field of Establishment Directive (legal basis: Directive 98/5); 3) Cooperation between national Bars through the CCBE. Among the most important conclusions, one should highlight the need for and importance of exchange of information between Bars and a need for reflection on tools that would make this exchange easier.

Final stretch towards a model code of conduct

[The preamble](#) and the [model article on fees](#) of the CCBE model code of deontology were adopted on 8 October 2021. They follow the adoption of model articles on relations between lawyers in May 2021, relations with clients in 2020, the independence of lawyers in 2017, and model articles on conflict of interests and confidentiality in 2016. As a final step, the complete set of provisions will be submitted for approval to the December CCBE Plenary Session. Once adopted, these provisions will form a model code of deontology which will be a non-binding source of inspiration for Bar Associations and Law Societies when drafting or revising their own national codes of deontology.

Regulation of legal services

The CCBE adopted [comments](#) on DG GROW studies which were published recently: [“Study on the impact of regulatory environment on digital automation in professional services”](#) and a summary report of a study entitled [“Mapping and assessment of legal and administrative barriers in the services sector”](#). The paper discusses specific assumptions and findings of the studies and highlights their shortcomings in a detailed manner. Moreover, the comments criticise the overall approach that seems to be adopted by the Commission and that these studies reflect. Namely, the CCBE considers that legal services cannot be treated like any other services and the studies do not pay enough attention to the role lawyers play in the administration of justice and the rule of law. The paper includes a series of recommendations and calls on the Commission to change its approach to the regulation of legal services.

Anti-Money Laundering

The CCBE voices concerns on the Anti-Money Laundering package

On 8 October, the CCBE adopted its [Preliminary comments](#) on the Anti-Money Laundering (AML) package that the Commission presented on 20 July. The CCBE duly noted the publication of the package and wished to express preliminary first comments with regards to the proposals, before adopting a more detailed position. In these preliminary comments, the CCBE recognises the need to have in place effective AML/CFT rules and welcomes the objective of the proposals to further harmonise standards. However, the paper also underlines the lack of full assessment of the existing framework, the risks of European level supervision, the importance of self-regulation and independence of the legal profession for ensuring the rule of law, and the risk of interference into individual cases. On 13 October, the AML committee also met with representatives from DG FISMA to listen to their presentation about the AML package and to hold a discussion about it.

CCBE participation in the FATF targeted consultation

On 16 September, the CCBE was invited by The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to participate in a targeted consultation to clarify FATF Recommendations 18/23. The aim of this project is for the FATF to clarify the requirements on Designated Non-Financial Businesses and Professions (DNFBPs) to implement group-wide anti-money laundering/countering terrorism financing measures. Under the FATF Recommendations, DNFBPs include lawyers, accountants, trust and company service providers, real estate agents, casinos and dealers in precious metals and stones. The CCBE was represented by the AML Committee Chair, Rupert Manhart, who provided comments on the questions asked and reiterated the CCBE's willingness to comment further on any envisaged amendments to the FATF recommendations.

Migration

The CCBE meets with the Council of Europe Special Representative for Migration and Refugees

On 29 September 2021, the Chair of CCBE Migration Committee, Noemí Alarcón Velasco met with the Council of Europe Special Representative for Migration and Refugees, Drahošlav Štefánek to discuss possibilities for future collaboration in order to ensure respect for the fundamental rights of persons seeking international protection, including the right of access to a lawyer. This meeting was also the occasion to discuss the [Council of Europe Action Plan on Protecting Vulnerable Persons in the Context of Migration and Asylum in Europe \(2021-2025\)](#), in particular with regard to its second pillar and the essential role the legal profession has to play in ensuring the respect of human rights and the rule of law through access to justice.

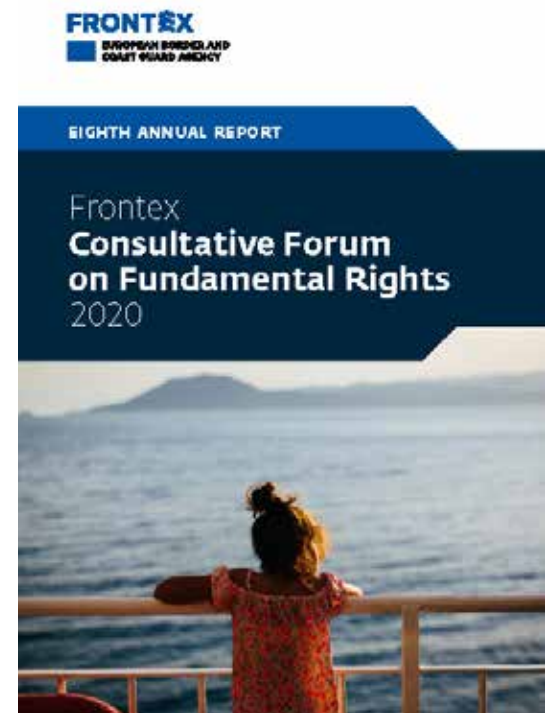


From left to right: Carolina Lasen Diaz, Legal Advisor at the Office of the Secretary General's Special Representative on Migration and Refugees, Noemí Alarcón Velasco, the Chair of CCBE Migration Committee, Drahošlav Štefánek, the Council of Europe Special Representative for Migration and Refugees and Nathan Roosbeek, the CCBE Legal Advisor

The CCBE becomes member of the Frontex Consultative Forum

On 21 September 2021, the CCBE officially became a member of the Frontex Consultative Forum. This membership is an excellent opportunity for the CCBE to ensure that the voice of the European legal profession is heard in fundamental rights matters.

Created in 2012, the Consultative Forum brings together key European institutions, international and civil society organisations to advise the European Border and Coast Guard Agency in Fundamental rights matters. The European Border and Coast Guard Regulation, under which the Consultative Forum operates, provides that the Agency and its Management Board should consult the Forum on the fundamental rights strategy, the functioning of the complaints mechanism, the codes of conduct, the common training curricula, and any other fundamental rights matters. The Agency shall also provide the forum with timely and effective access to information concerning the respect for fundamental rights, including by facilitating on the spot visits to its operations, as well as of the follow up to the recommendations made by the Forum. In this regard, on 20 October 2021, the [Frontex Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights published its eighth annual report for the year 2020](#). More information about the forum and its mission can be found [here](#).



Human Rights

Exchanges with the European Court of Human Rights

On 22 October 2021, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) held for the first time a meeting with the representatives of the National Bars and Law Societies of the Council of Europe member States. This meeting is aimed at creating a broader and more institutionalised dialogue between the ECtHR and the National Bars and Law Societies of Europe in order to better improve the protection of Human Rights through the work of the ECtHR and the important contribution of the legal profession. The event was co-organised with the CCBE and started with the introductory interventions of Robert Spano, the President of the ECtHR, Marialena Tsirli, the Registrar of the ECtHR, and James MacGuill, the CCBE First Vice-President.



The meeting was then divided in three panel discussions with the following interventions:

- The Chair of the CCBE Permanent Delegation to the European Court of Human Rights (Piers Gardner) in the first panel on case-processing efficiency, including impact strategy, prioritisation policy, the non-contentious phase, friendly settlements, and unilateral declarations, shared some of the proposals made by the CCBE in its [position for reform of the ECHR machinery](#).
- The Chair of the CCBE European Convention on the legal profession Working Group (Laurent Pettiti) in the second panel on improving the Court's working methods and communication with applicants and their representatives, addressed the operation of Rule 47 as well as correspondence, during which he shared some of the findings collected by the CCBE in a survey addressed to lawyers on the operation of Rule 47.
- Carri Ginter, lawyer from Estonia and Head of Dispute Resolution & Risk Management at the Sorainen law firm, in the third panel on information technologies, presented the means of communication, and remote access to case-file, and shared with the ECtHR the process of the advanced digitalisation of judicial proceedings in Estonia.

Defence of the defenders

In September and October 2021, the CCBE sent 12 letters and joined several initiatives in support of endangered lawyers in Belarus, China, Iran, Nicaragua, Nigeria, the Philippines, Thailand, Tunisia, and Turkey.

The CCBE also co-signed the following joint statements and press releases:

- Press release by several lawyers' organisations and bars, following the legal Fact-Finding Mission to monitor and observe current mass trials against lawyers in Turkey;
- Joint statement calling for the reinstatement of lawyer Natalia Matskevich and urging the Belarus Bar Association to refrain from using disbarment as a tool of retaliation against lawyers.



All CCBE letters of support to endangered lawyers and other joint initiatives can be consulted on the [CCBE Human Rights portal "Defence of the defenders"](#)

Professional indemnity insurance

On 27 September 2021, the Chairman of the Insurance Committee and representatives of the CCBE had the opportunity to exchange views with representatives of Legal Protection Insurance. The aim was to continue the dialogue initiated in 2019 between the two organisations and to discuss the idea of setting up guidelines for practical solutions in case of difficulties that may arise in the lawyer-insurance-insured relationship. Among the topics discussed, the free choice of a lawyer, the respect of professional secrecy/legal professional privilege and the challenges posed by the increasing use of digital tools were on the agenda. This exchange should continue in the upcoming months.





Upcoming Events

24 NOVEMBER 2021
CCBE - FRA joint webinar

10 DECEMBER 2021
CCBE Plenary Session

10 DECEMBER 2021
CCBE Human Rights Awards Ceremony

CCBE - FRA joint webinar

The [EU Fundamental Rights Agency](#) (FRA) and the CCBE are organising a joint webinar on 24 November from 11.00 to 13.00 (Brussels time). The webinar aims to provide information on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and its use at a national level, as well as to give information on FRA materials, database and e-learning courses. More information on the programme and registration is available on the [CCBE website](#).

WEBINAR

FRA resources regarding the
EU Charter of Fundamental Rights



24 November 2021



11.00 - 12.45 (Brussels time)

Event will take place in English - No simultaneous interpretation

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The voice of European Lawyers

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