



CONSIGLIO DELL'ORDINE Avvocati di Firenze	
Data di arrivo	10 OTT 2024
Prot. n.	13589



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE EUROPEAN NETWORK OF LAWYERS' ORGANISATIONS ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE, RULE OF LAW AND TRAINING

The Ordine degli Avvocati di Firenze AND the European Lawyers Foundation
(hereinafter called 'the signatories')

Having regard to the following:

1. Access to justice is one of the main pillars of the European legal profession, given that lawyers guarantee effective access to justice for citizens and businesses.
2. European lawyers have traditionally been, and continue to be, in the front line of defence of the rule of law, democratic values, fundamental rights and liberties.
3. There is a recognised need to provide continuing legal education to lawyers in Europe on EU law in various areas to ensure that such lawyers can represent citizens and businesses in the most effective way and guarantee equality of arms in the courts.
4. The European Lawyers Foundation (ELF) has been working as an informal network of Member States' Bars and Law Societies on training of lawyers and access to justice issues since its establishment in 2014. To date, ELF's Advisory Board has been the forum for representatives of those Bars and Law Societies (representing to date 14 EU Member States) to discuss training and access to justice projects.
5. ELF's statutes in relation to the functioning of the Advisory Board, together with the grant agreements signed between the European Commission and ELF and its Bar and Law Society partners in various projects have to date been the rules that have governed this informal network.

THE SIGNATORIES HAVE AGREED TO THE FOLLOWING MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MoU) FOR THE FORMALISATION OF A EUROPEAN NETWORK OF LAWYERS' ORGANISATIONS AS A VIRTUAL NETWORK WITHOUT ESTABLISHING A SEPARATE LEGAL PERSONALITY:



Article 1 – Objectives of the network

The network will be a forum and a space of work where the organisations listed under article 2 can collaborate in order to promote better access to justice in the European Union (EU), to strengthen the rule of law and to facilitate knowledge of EU and Member States' legal systems through planning and implementation of projects that include training activities for lawyers.

The network is constituted as a platform for training of, and exchange of knowledge between, European lawyers through the Bars and Law Societies of EU Member States as well as the foundations and training institutions of those organisations.

Article 2 - Members of the network

1. The Bar signatory is member of the network, together with those lawyers' organisations which request to join the network subsequently and fulfil one of the following criteria:
 - a). being a bar or law society at European level or at national or local level within the EU, EEA and Switzerland; or
 - b). being either a foundation or a lawyer training organisation under the control of a bar or law society falling within a). above;
2. Those organisations falling under a.) or b.) above in one of the countries with an association agreement with the EU are able to become associated members of the network.

Article 3 – Accession and withdrawal from the network

1. Organisations which fulfil the criteria established in article 2 of this MoU will become members of the network as soon as the ELF's secretariat has confirmed to them that they are eligible to become a member and after consultations with the ELF's Board of Directors.
2. Members of the network can withdraw from the network, effective on the first day of the month following their notification to the ELF's Secretariat of their wish to withdraw.

Article 4 - Composition of the network

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1. The number of organisations that can be members of the network is unlimited. However, there must be only one contact point per Member State, to be agreed between the member organisations from that Member State and notified to the secretariat of the network. The contact point will act as the liaison between those organisations and the network
2. The decision-taking bodies of the network will be the ELF's Board of Directors and Supervisory Board within the competences attributed to each in the ELF's statutes

Article 5 – Secretariat of the network

1. The members of the network agree that, because of its experience, nature and mandate, the secretariat of the network will continue to be exercised by ELF.

Article 6 - Frequency of meetings, agenda and documents

1. The contact points of the network will meet twice per year with the secretariat.
2. The date and place of the meetings will be fixed well in advance to facilitate the attendance of the contact points. Contact points may request an invitation for representatives of other members of the network who are not contact points. These invitations will need to be requested in advance and are subject to availability of seats.
3. The agenda and documents for the meetings will be sent by the secretariat to contact points one week before the meeting takes place. Contact points are responsible to forward these documents to the organisations in their respective countries which are members of the network for the purposes of consultation.

Article 7 – Information and invitation to joint projects

1. All members of the network will be informed about possible future projects to be prepared by ELF.
2. All members of the network will have the right to join these projects subject to the conditions set out for participation in each particular project.
3. All members of the network may propose ideas or present possible projects to the network in order for them to be assessed for their feasibility.



Article 8 - Contribution to the network

Membership of the network is free of charge. However, members of the network who decide to engage in projects proposed by the network will be requested to make a donation to the Foundation in order to cover the costs of the preparation of project proposals.

For Ordine degli Avvocati di Firenze

For the European Lawyers Foundation



On 10 October 2024

Sergio Paparo

President of the Bar

On 10 October 2024

Dominique Attias

Chair of the Board of Directors

European Lawyers Foundation

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