

Minutes of the EELA Board Meeting of 15 October 2021
Athens Capital Center Hotel - MGallery Collection
4 Eleftheriou Venizelou Avenue and 2 Kriezotou street,
Syntagma Square
10671 Athens
(14:00 – 19:00 local time)

Board members:

Klaus-Stefan Hohenstatt (Chair)
Anna Jerndorf (Vice-Chair)
Roland Gerlach
Youliana Naoumova
Helene Amsick
Pirkko-Liis Harkmaa
Carola Möller
Claire Toumieux
Raquel Flórez Escobar
Constantin Bakopoulos
Jón Sigurðsson
Valeria Morosini
Pierre Elvinger
Christiaan Oberman
Sten Foy
Bartłomiej Raczkowski
Also Participating: C-IN: Karolína Tylšová

Participating via **Teams:**

Terence McCrann
Maria Da Gloria Leitao
Marko Lovrić
Marie Janšová
Juliet Carp
Gareth Walls
Corina Radu
Dusan Nitschneider
Zoltán Csernus
Joan Cradden
George Georgiou
and Martin Diller (Secretary General)

Chris Engels (excused)
Matthew Brincat (excused)
Ueli Sommer (excused)

1. Welcome and opening

Klaus-Stefan Hohenstatt welcomed the Board Members to the Board meeting.

2. Minutes of the last Board meeting of 11 May 2021

The minutes of the Board meeting of 11 May 2021 are approved.

3. Logistics around Athens conference 2022 (Kostis & Karolina and local conference organizer)

C-IN, the local conference organizer and Kostis Bakopoulos report about the current state of the conference preparations and board members discuss various details of the set-up.

A “Save the date” reminder is to be send to the members as soon as practicable.

The invitation to attend along with the program will be send as usual in early January 2022. Members wishing to attend will be asked for an up to date status of vaccination, should there be no major changes to the pandemic situation.

4. Speakers and topics for Athens conference 2022

The speakers and topics for the Athens conference were discussed in detail.

5. Prolongation of our contract with EELC

Christiaan referred that we have been working with EELC for almost two years now and the quality remains very good. He proposes the extension of the contract until November 2022. The price is of EUR 27.500. It was agreed to extend the contract until November 2022 and that EELA would make questionnaire/survey for the members at the beginning of 2022, to be taken into account for the renewal for the upcoming year 2023.

6. EELA website and EELA LinkedIn account and possible outsourcing of the membership management to C-IN

Klaus-Stefan referred that he has had several discussions with involved parties to improve the service and quality of the website. As discussed in previous meetings, the contract with Loyals has been terminated and C-IN is now handling the website. Klaus-Stefan referred that the cooperation with C-IN would be extended in two directions: first, it would be beneficiary for EELA to transfer the membership administration from Gleiss Lutz to C-IN, as the entire process can be automatized, and second, there is the need to bring more life to the website and the social media presence (LinkedIn), which will be managed by C-IN.

As to the second point, Klaus-Stefan asks if there are 2-3 board members available to support the Chair and Vice-Chair and to provide input and thoughts on improving the social media presence of EELA. It was decided that Dusan, Carola, Marie, and Corina shall have an initial discussion on the content and platform management. Then a smaller team would continue with the implementation with C-IN.

In regards to the first point, Klaus-Stefan asked if the Board principally agrees to transfer the membership administration to C-IN. The benefit would be to have the administrative processes in connection with membership and payments, as well as conference organization and payments in the same hand. This would entail fewer but important tasks for the Gleiss Lutz team (e.g. Mariola Saliu), to which Martin Diller agreed. The Board concurs that it is important to have always a back-up plan and access to full membership data at any time. C-IN has already provided a financial offer and Klaus-Stefan and Anna will work out the details. Martin Diller confirms his availability to assist with the outsourcing project. In principle, the Board agrees with the transfer of the membership administration to C-IN and a final decision is to be made, once the details have been clarified.

7. State of preparation of the EELA-ERA conference in Brussels 26 November 2026

Pierre refers that the Brussels conference will be held in presence, under observation of strict health & safety rules. In case of any unforeseen events, there is a backup plan to have the seminar via WebEx. Some speakers have declined and need to be replaced. Pierre asks the Board for suggestions, for a speaker from Germany and one from France. The topics and presentations of the conference are explained.

8. Racial equity challenge, equality and diversity - feedback and next steps

Raquel, Pierre and Juliet recommend holding the challenge before the 2022 conference, to enable participants to discuss during the conference and widening the participation to any European lawyer (and not only EELA lawyers). The board agrees on this approach and views this as another opportunity to collaborate with other associations and to advertise EELA in the legal community. EELA should take the lead with this subject and enable all lawyers and in particular younger lawyers, to participate and discuss on this topic. Klaus-Stefan thanks the team working on the challenge initiative for the organization in 2021 as well as on their willingness to repeat the challenge in 2022.

The board discusses the involvement of younger lawyers in the association. There are few current impediments related to specific jurisdictions, where lawyers need to have a certain experience to gain a formal specialization as employment lawyers. Another point is that younger lawyers do not always have the financial support from their firms to enable them attending the EELA conferences. Further, also equality and diversity are very important topics, which the board will further discuss in the next board meeting.

9. Election of the chair and the vice-chair

Klaus-Stefan and Anna were standing for re-election as Chair and Vice Chair. Klaus-Stefan invited to further candidacies but no further candidacies were brought forward.

The voting process is secret. Non-present board members have given proxy to present Board members.

The Board voted that Klaus-Stefan and Anna will hold their current positions for two further years (until September 2023).

The re-elected Chair and Vice-Chair thank the Board for their trust and confidence.

10. Election of the Secretary

Martin explained that after more than 20 years, it is time for him to say good-bye. With the transfer of the membership administration to C-IN, it may be necessary to monitor the transition maybe for some time. For this purpose, he was asked to stay in office until the Athens conference in June 2022. During this time, a decision should be made whether the position of Secretary General is still necessary and someone may take over, or whether it will become superfluous in the future. In Juliet's opinion, the position of Secretary General is very important, even if the workload diminishes. The position is sustained by Klaus-Stefan and other board members. It is agreed that insight on German law would be necessary for the person (Board member or external) holding this position. The Board thanked Martin for his most valuable contribution to EELA and to the EELA Board and expressed the wish that he continues to hold the position in future. Martin assured the Board that he would continue to support with insight and background information when necessary, even after his resignation from the position.

The Board voted for Martin to hold the position of Secretary General for an extension for another year (until September 2022).

11. Board elections in Athens 2022

Martin provided the overview for the upcoming elections before the meeting. A newsflash from EELA is proposed to be sent out, to inform the members on the election process. Board members standing for re-election were invited to write to members in their respective jurisdiction.

12. Conferences 2023 – 2025 and 2026

Corinna referred on the preparations for the 2023 Bucharest conference. An unofficial booking of the conference venue has been made. There are two options for the venue for the social event and some hotels. The bookings will be finalized soon. There are no problems so far that need to be discussed.

Jon refers on the 2024 Iceland conference. The conference venue has been booked. No hotels have been booked yet. Jon will follow up with C-IN for further arrangements. The approximate timing of the conference will be in early June.

The 2025 conference will take place in Malta, as decided years ago. As to the 2026 conference, a possible venue might be Norway. Juliet remarked that the last UK conference took place more than 20 years ago and suggested to consider a conference to be held in the UK, as this is very important for the relation between UK and Europe. London and Cambridge could be options. Raquel suggested to hold a conference in Spain. Klaus-Stefan proposed to have a look at the past venues and then decide at the next board meeting on the conferences 2025 and 2026.

It is proposed that the list of past venues is added to the compendium for the Board meeting, in order to provide the necessary overview for the decision making process.

13. Approval of the Secretarial fees for Gleiss Lutz for 2020

This topic will be moved to the next board meeting.

14. Date and timing of next Board meeting

Klaus-Stefan will call for the next Board meeting latest in January. The necessity for a physical meeting or rather a virtual one is discussed. Klaus-Stefan will propose dates and a venue with an airport with good connections.

Klaus-Stefan Hohenstatt

Anna Jerndorf

Approved on 31 January 2022