

## **I. CONFERENCE PROTOCOL**

Approved by the Board on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2004, held in Frankfurt

Amended on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2004

Amended on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2005

Amended on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2005

Amended on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2006

Amended on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2008

Amended on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2008

Amended on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2009

Amended on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Amended on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2024

### **1. Status of this Protocol**

This Protocol has been prepared to guide the Conference Committee in preparing for conferences and has been formally approved by EELA's Board, subject to EELA's Constitution. Changes to the Protocol and deviations from the Protocol will normally be subject to approval by EELA's Board.

For the avoidance of doubt, this Protocol shall not restrict the Board's freedom to make future decisions; is not contractually binding on any party; and is not intended to be enforceable by any member of EELA or speaker, or any other person.

This version of the Protocol applies from the date it is approved by the Board and supersedes and replaces all previous versions.

### **2. Timing**

The Association's conference will be held annually in the early part of the calendar year, usually no later than mid-June.

### **3. Host EELA Member State**

The EELA Member State which hosts the conference will change every year.

### **4. Conference Committee**

As provided by art. 6.2 of the Constitution, “The Board shall establish a Conference Committee to organise the annual conferences. The Conference Committee shall consist of five Board Members comprising the three Board Members from the jurisdictions in which the next three annual conferences are to be held and the Board members from the jurisdictions in which the last two annual conference took place. The Chair of the Conference Committee shall be the Board Member from the jurisdiction in which the next annual conference is to take place.

**5. Language of the Conference**

The language of the conference will be English. If appropriate, translation from the host language to English will be provided unless there are exceptional circumstances and as otherwise agreed by the Conference Committee.

**6. Conference Organiser**

A conference organiser may be used in order to assist with the organisation of the conference subject to the budget agreed by the Conference Committee and ratified by the Board. At the date of this Protocol the Conference Organiser is C-IN ([info@eela.org](mailto:info@eela.org)).

**7. Sessions and Speakers**

**6.1. Organisation of Sessions**

- (1) The Conference Committee will decide the number of speakers for each session. The number of speakers should be appropriate to the length of the session and the topic. As a general, non-binding guideline: up to 5 speakers should be considered for long sessions and up to 4 speakers for short sessions. A long session lasts up to 2 hours and a short session up to 1.5 hours. A plenary session usually lasts 1,5 hours.
- (2) Board Members cannot be speakers.
- (3) The sessions are organised as follows:
  - The Conference Committee appoints a Board Member to be responsible for every session (Session Organiser). This will normally be discussed and agreed with the Board. For the avoidance of doubt, Session Organisers cannot be speakers. Session Organisers are not mentioned on the agenda or on other materials distributed outside of the Board.

- The Session Organiser appoints in consultation with the Conference Committee a Session Leader – a person who will lead and chair the session.
- The Session Organiser is responsible for ensuring that the session takes place and for ensuring that the Session Leader receives clear guidance regarding their responsibilities and deadlines.
- The Session Leader is responsible for the content and conduct of the session at the conference and must keep the Session Organiser informed.
- Sessions should be organised with a view to involving the audience in the discussion.
- Good preparation of the sessions is of utmost importance. Session Organisers and Session Leaders may decide to hold live rehearsals of the sessions.
- Sessions do not have to be organised as traditional panels. Alternative ways of organising sessions that focus on wider audience engagement (e.g. moot trial) are encouraged.

## **6.2. External Speakers**

The expenses of external speakers (i.e. who are not members of EELA) will be paid by EELA. These expenses will cover hotel and travel costs, subject to limits approved by the Conference Committee or the Conference Chair, as the case. However, the following conditions will apply:

- No expenses will be paid in relation to the spouse, family or any companion of the speaker; the same rule applies to their participation in social events, which will be subject to fees;
- The cost of two nights' stay in a nominated hotel together with breakfast will be paid. Usually a hotel selected for use in conjunction with the conference will be the designated hotel; one additional night can be offered to external speakers from non-European countries, subject to the approval of the Conference Committee;
- External speakers will not be required to pay a delegate fee for the conference and will have the right to participate in the conference, including the social events;
- Travel costs, standard class, will be paid up to a maximum of EUR 950.
- Travel costs for external speakers from non-European countries will be paid up to a maximum of EUR 1500, subject to the approval of the Conference Committee.

Speakers for whom substantial expenses may require reimbursement should not normally be approved by the Session Organiser without the prior notification and approval of the Conference Committee. Requests should normally be directed to the Conference Organiser and Conference Chair in the first instance.

Exceptions to the above conditions are subject to a decision of the Conference Committee (which may decide to seek approval from the Board).

Claims for expenses should be made on a standard form supported by receipts where possible and preferably sent to the Conference Organiser.

Any enquiries in relation to outstanding expenses claims from speakers should be directed to the Conference Organiser in the first instance.

The Conference Committee may decide to pay a fee to external speakers. Fees which would in total exceed EUR 7,000 per conference are to be discussed with the Board.

### **6.3. EELA Member Speakers**

No expenses will be paid or accommodation provided for the EELA Member Speakers. EELA Member Speakers will pay the normal conference fee.

## **8. Statement on Expectations regarding Conduct**

The attention of all Board members, speakers, members and guests should be drawn to EELA's Statement on Expectations regarding Conduct.

## **9. Conduct of the Conference**

### **7.1. Venue**

The conference will be in the chosen host Member State at a venue agreed by the Conference Committee.

### **7.2. Chair**

The Chair of the Conference Committee will chair the conference.

### **7.3. General Assembly**

The General Assembly of the Association may be held at the same time as the annual conference.

#### **7.4. Duration**

The conference will last for no more than two days, usually commencing on a Friday morning and ending on the following Saturday afternoon unless otherwise agreed by the Conference Committee. Usually the Conference is preceded by a welcome reception on Thursday evening.

#### **7.5. Programme and Speakers**

- (1) The conference programme will be decided by the Conference Committee. The programme should not include topics of purely national interest. Topics may include professional skills (e.g. negotiations).
- (2) The speakers will be decided by the Session Organisers. Speakers may be chosen from among members of the Association or other persons from outside of the Association with relevant expertise in the selected topics (external speakers).
- (3) The criteria for selecting speakers may, eg, include:
  - the speaker's expertise in the selected topic/track record of good public speaking;
  - equality of opportunity (eg on the basis of age, sex, race, disability etc)
  - a diverse geographical coverage (avoiding in particular that several representatives of the same country appear on the same panel, save for the representation of the host country at the plenary session);
  - the speaker must ideally not have spoken at a recent EELA conference (the last three years can be used as a reasonable reference in this regard);
  - the speaker's initiative in proposing a topic
  - in sessions where it is relevant - balanced representation of employer, employee and trade union/collective perspectives at the conference, if possible
  - avoiding over-representation of speakers from the same law firm or alliance of law firms on a panel and more broadly, at the conference
- (4) Session Organisers are asked to provide details of proposed speakers to the Conference Chair before speakers are appointed, wherever practical, so that the Conference Chair can maintain an up-to-date view of the diversity of panels etc. (It is recognised that this will not always be practical.)
- (5) Session Organisers may also find it helpful to discuss potential speakers with the Board Member from the relevant jurisdiction. When speakers are selected from among EELA members, it is recommended that Session Organizers discuss potential speakers with the Board Member from the relevant jurisdiction before speakers are appointed (in order to avoid over-representation of speakers from the same country).

- (6) The conference will be opened by the Chair of the Association.
- (7) The conference will normally start with a short welcome by the Chair of the Conference Committee, which will be followed by a keynote speech. Prominent/renowned speakers may be invited to give a speech in the opening session.
- (8) After the keynote speech, there may be a plenary session. This is the most prestigious session of the Conference. It may discuss a subject of a philosophical/political/economic nature which is of general interest to employment lawyers.
- (9) There should not normally be more than 3 parallel sessions (i.e. non-plenary sessions taking place at the same time). However, the Conference Committee may decide to organize 4 parallel sessions, eg depending on the topics and the recent developments and the size of rooms etc.
- (10) Non-legal sessions may also be included in the conference programme. The Conference Committee may decide to limit the number of participants/session, depending on the format of each session and the capacity constraints of the conference venue.

## 7.6 Organisation Timetable

The following timetable for the organisation of the conference will be used as a guide:

June	Call for topics sent by the Chair of the Conference Committee to all Association members after the previous conference
June-September	Long list of topics to be sent to the Conference Committee and short list sent to the Board
September	Appointment of all Session Organisers
September/October	Draft agenda, Session Organisers, preliminary budget to be presented to the Board.
November	Completed agenda (incl. speakers)
December/January	First mailing of conference details to Association members
December/January	Registration opens

The Conference Committee may decide to settle a different timetable for each conference, eg depending on the registration opening date, which may vary.

The Conference Committee reports to the Board on the progress made and the completion of every stage

Note: Mailings will only be sent to fully paid-up members of the Association at the relevant

time.

### **7.7 Handouts**

Notes will normally be expected in respect of each session and must be provided by speakers in accordance with the timetable communicated to the Session Organisers and Session Leaders.

### **7.8 Dealings with Speakers**

If the speaker accepts an invitation to speak at the conference, they should be asked to supply their biographical details as soon as possible in the format communicated to the Session Leaders and Speakers.

Each speaker should also be asked to complete and return a speaker checklist in standard form dealing, for example, with the use of audio-visual aids, copyright waiver etc. Speakers should be thanked for their contribution after the conference has concluded. Presentations prepared by EELA members should be drafted using the EELA presentation format and not showing their own law firm logo. Slides by external speakers may be made using their own slide format.

### **7.9 Social Event**

The conference programme should normally include a social event, preferably a gala dinner on the Friday evening of the conference, to be attended by members, speakers, guests and their spouses/partners (if, eg, present, and space allows). The Conference is preceded by a welcome reception on Thursday evening. Additional social events may be included in the programme, subject to the decision of the Conference Committee.

### **7.10 Marketing and private functions at the Conference**

Members should avoid organising private events, overt marketing and sales during the conference period, respectively from the start of the welcome reception on Thursday evening until the end of the Annual General Assembly on Saturday. Any side event that might detract from the Conference is discouraged. The Conference Chair should take particular care to remind host jurisdiction Members of this expectation.

### **7.11. Sponsorship**

Appropriate sponsorship of the conference is permitted subject to approval by the

Conference Committee. Law Firms and alliances of law firms should not be sponsors.

#### **7.12. Publicity**

Any requests from advertisers to exhibit at the conference will be considered by the Conference Committee. No costs should be incurred by the Association in relation to outside advertising.

Members of the press may be permitted to attend the conference session subject to the agreement of the Chair of the Conference Committee and applicable laws.

Arrangements for publicising the conference will be made by the Chair of the Conference Committee subject to discussion with the Conference Committee.

Unless otherwise agreed those present should respect 'Chatham House Rules' in relation to the content of sessions and where appropriate this should be made clear at the start of the relevant session.

#### **7.13. Health, safety, security and accessibility**

The Conference Committee shall give due consideration to health, safety, security and accessibility. For example:

- EELA members, speakers and guests should be clear about where they can obtain information (normally they should direct queries to the Conference Organiser);
- where appropriate links should be provided eg to information provided by venues, transport hubs, or tours that may be of assistance to EELA members;
- where appropriate feedback should be sought from appropriate people regarding the suitability and accessibility of venues and materials, any appropriate adjustments etc.

#### **7.14. Guests**

Invitations to guests at the conference and/or social events will be sent out by the Chair of the Conference Committee after agreement with the Conference Committee.

Suggestions for guests may be provided by all Board members. There will be a limit on the number of guest places decided each year by the Conference Committee. The expenses of guests will be treated in the same way as the expenses of external speakers.

#### **7.15. Delegate Lists**

All delegates to the annual conference will receive the provided contact details of the delegates at the conference, subject to each delegate's consent



**7.16. Evaluation and Debrief**

All delegates to the conference will be asked to complete evaluation forms at the conference in readiness for a debrief at the next Board meeting following the conference.