

The Fifth Scientific-practical conference

The Human Rights Lawyers' Movement and the Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer: Theoretical Aspects, Best Practices, and New Challenges

Date: June 20, 2025

Place: European Humanities University, Vilnius, Lithuania

Format: hybrid – online (ZOOM) / offline in EHU campus, Vilnius, Savičiaus str., 17

Languages: Belarusian, English, Russian

Partners: the Center for Constitutionalism and Human Rights (CCHR), EHU, in collaboration with the International Partnership of ILIA alumni and experts, and Belarusian Human Rights Lawyers Association (tbc.)

Audience: EHU students and teachers, human rights lawyers from various bar associations, and paralegals.

The conference idea and concept

The International Scientific-practical Conference “The Human Rights Lawyers' Movement and the Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer: Theoretical Aspects, Best Practices, and New Challenges” is organized by the EHU Centre for Constitutionalism and Human Rights (CCHR) within the framework of the “Lawyers for the Rule of Law” direction in cooperation with the International Partnership of ILIA alumni and experts. It is the fifth in a series of scientific and practical events organized by the CCHR and brings together representatives of the EHU academic community, students, alumni, experts and representatives of international bodies and national institutions of Lithuania.

The discussions and scientific and practical debates within the framework of the CCHR work have formed the basis for a number of scientific and scientific-practical publications prepared by the participants of the conferences. They also became the basis for written contributions and appeals to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers and the CoE [Committee of Experts on the Protection of Lawyers](#).

In addition, through joint meetings and discussions, “Lawyers for the Rule of Law” direction has been enriched by the program “Lawyers for the Rule of Law. Education and Vocational Training”. In the period 2021-2024, EHU CCHR in cooperation with ILIA conducted two cycles of this educational program, which brought together lawyers and human rights defenders from the Eastern European region - Azerbaijan, Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. The key courses of the cycles focused on the standards of the legal profession and professional associations of lawyers. Through training courses and conferences, human rights lawyers worked in parallel with the process of drafting the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer, reflecting on their role in guaranteeing the right to defense and access to justice and offering the drafters of the Convention their views on the current content of the standards of the legal profession. ILIA representatives contributed to the understanding of the need for the Convention, were at the origins of the launch of this process and participated in consultations with the Committee of Experts on the Protection of Lawyers (CJ-AV), composed of representatives of states

and professional associations of lawyers, which worked on the drafting of the text of the Convention.

On March 12, 2025, the [Council of Europe announced](#) the adoption of the first international treaty aimed at protecting the legal profession. The Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer will be opened for signature on May 13, 2025.

The conference “The Human Rights Lawyers' Movement and the Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer: Theoretical Aspects, Best Practices and New Challenges” is a platform for reflection on the efforts of the human rights lawyers' movement towards the Convention, for the exchange of knowledge on the formation of international standards in line with the challenges of society, as well as for the consolidation of efforts to promote these standards and their implementation in the national legal system of countries in their effort to improve access to legal aid and judicial protection.

Objectives of the conference:

1. Reviewing the best practices and international standards in light of the International Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer adopted by the Council of Europe.
2. Development of common approaches to forms of cooperation in the context of the education of lawyers and EHU students between the CE(HELP), EHU and ILIA.
3. Discussing the further development of new concepts and approaches in the context of the right to a fair trial and access to justice.

This event supports the third mission of the European Humanities University by strengthening the cooperation with civil society in Belarus and in the region. It reflects the commitment to the values enshrined in the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Science and Study and contributes to the relevance of the scientific and educational system to the current needs of society, supporting the openness of the University and its integration into the international international community

Conference preparatory materials:

The [Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer](#)

[Explanatory report of the Convention](#)

Boothe-Perry, N. A. (2009). *Professionalism's triple E query: Is legal academia enhancing, eluding, or evading professionalism?* Loyola Law Review, 55(2), 517-XXX.

[https://law.loyno.edu/sites/law.loyno.edu/files/images/24_55LoyLRev517\(2009\).pdf](https://law.loyno.edu/sites/law.loyno.edu/files/images/24_55LoyLRev517(2009).pdf)

McBride, J. (2021.). *Feasibility study on a new, binding or non-binding, European legal instrument on the profession of lawyer: Possible added value and effectiveness.* Arab Center for International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Education.

https://aci.hl.org/articles.htm?article_id=3&lang=en-GB

van Domselaar, I. (2021). *Where Were the Law Schools? On Legal Education as Training for Justice and the Rule of Law (Against the 'Dark Sides of Legality')*. Netherlands Journal of Legal Philosophy, 50(1), 3-12

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3871242

Conference Program June 20, 2025	
09.30 - 10.00 CEST	Registration of conference participants. Welcome coffee.
10.00 - 10.10 CEST	Conference opening: PhD. Vilius Šadauskas , Rector of the European Humanities University Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ingrida Daneliene , Head of the Academic Department of Social Sciences
10.10 - 11.30 CEST	Plenary Session 1
The Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer: legacy and results.	
<p>Moderator - Lela Metrevelli</p> <p>Reporter - tbc.</p> <p>Experts:</p> <p>Maria Ślęzak - Attorney at law, Immediate Past President of the European Association of Lawyers (AEA-EAL), Observer to the Council of Europe Committee of Experts on the Protection of Lawyers / Prof. Alicja Jagielska-Burduk - Chair of the foreign affairs committee and member of the board of the National Council of Attorneys at law in Poland.</p> <p>Judith Lichtenberg - lawyer from the Netherlands, representative of Lawyers for Lawyers, Observer to the Council of Europe Committee of Experts on the Protection of Lawyers;</p> <p>Vaida Rudenaite - Senior Advisor of Legal Services Policy Group of the Ministry of Justice of Lithuania, member of the Council of Europe Committee of Experts on the Protection of Lawyers.</p> <p>Participants: all conference participants.</p> <p>Questions for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the modern approaches to the legal profession and how are they reflected in the Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer? • Key discussions on the status and role of lawyers and bar associations during the drafting of the Convention to strengthen the rule of law, access to justice and the protection of human rights and freedoms. • Prospects for ratification of the Convention at the global level to strengthen the international legal framework for the protection of the legal profession. 	
11.30 - 11.50 CEST	Coffee break
11.50 - 13.10 CEST	Plenary Session 2
Movement of Human Rights Lawyers for Strengthening International Standards of Legal Profession	
Moderator - tbc.	

Reporter - tbc.

Speakers and topics for discussion:

- The success of the movement of human rights lawyers towards the Convention for the Protection of the Legal Profession.

Lela Metrevelli - Associate Member of the EHU CCHR, Director of NGO "Human Rights Embassy (Moldova), leader of ILIA experts and alumni partnership.

- The Role of the Academic Community in Shaping Legal Professionals Committed to Justice and the Rule of Law

Dr. Liudmila Ulyashyna - Associate Professor, Head of the CCHR, EHU.

- Human Rights Lawyers movement for the protection of the profession of lawyers on global level.

Natallia Matskevich - human rights lawyer, member of the EHU Center for Constitutionalism and Human Rights.

Participants: all participants of the conference.

13.10 - 14.00 CEST

Lunch break

14.00 - 15.20 CEST

Plenary Session 3

The Role of the State and Bar Associations in Strengthening the Standards of the Legal Profession

Moderator – Natallia Matskevich.

Reporter - tbc.

Speakers and topics for discussion:

- Protection of Lawyers by Their Bar Associations in Spain

Nielson Sánchez Stewart - advocate, Dr. Iuris, Vice President of the Deontology Committee of the Spanish General Council of Advocates and of the AEA-EAL

- Prospects for the implementation of amendments to the Law on the Lithuanian Bar in relation to third-country lawyers

Justas Vilys - member of the Council of the Lithuanian Bar Association

- The role of the ECtHR jurisprudence in overcoming problems with the realization of a free legal profession

Iurie Levinte - human rights lawyer, national expert in the program "Lawyers for the Rule of Law. Education and Vocational Training": Human Rights Embassy, Moldova tbc

- The role of the Georgian Bar association in the Strengthening the Standards of the Legal Profession

David Asatiani - President of the European Association of Lawyers (AEA-EAL), Georgia

- Implementation of the Convention in the future democratic Belarus – tbc.

Participants: all participants of the conference.

15.20 - 15.40 CEST

Coffee break

15.40 – 16:30 CEST	<i>Plenary Session 4</i>
Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer in the Education of Lawyers	
<p><i>Moderator – Uladzislau Suvorau</i></p> <p><i>Reporter - tbc.</i></p> <p><i>Speakers and topics for discussion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The role of the Council of Europe in promotion the human rights and rule of law standards among legal professionals <p>Dr. Sergey Dikman - <i>Adviser on Strategic Co-operation Development, Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law, Council of Europe</i> and Krystyna Khokhlova - <i>Programme manager, Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) Programme, Council of Europe</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The program “Lawyers for the Rule of Law. Education and Vocational Training”: Achievements and Prospects for Further Development. <p><i>Course participants and organizers.</i></p>	
16.30 - 17.00 CEST	<i>Summarizing and concluding the conference</i>