

## Stockholm Declaration of Lay Judges in Europe

The European Network of Associations of Lay Judges (ENALJ) representing organisations from the following European countries:

Austria  
Belgium  
Bulgaria  
Estonia  
Finland  
France  
Germany  
Hungary  
Italy  
Northern Ireland  
Poland  
Portugal  
Spain  
Sweden  
Switzerland

has agreed the following declaration as a result of its General Assembly held in Stockholm from 12 to 14 May 2017:

1. The participation of lay judges<sup>1</sup> is an essential element of any justice system which wishes to be transparent and comprehensible.

2. In many countries the participation of lay judges is founded in a tradition going back hundreds of years. In a world which is becoming more and more differentiated and specialised, the continued involvement of lay judges will ensure that the justice system is accessible and understandable by the people and always responds to changes in society.

**3. Lay judges are a fundamental element of Civil Society. And therefore this Lay Judge Forum explicitly opposes the efforts of any individual European government and parliament to reduce or abolish participation of lay judges.**

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<sup>1</sup> The term lay judge covers several types of involvement in the delivering of justice and there are a number of roles undertaken by the lay judge such as: lay magistrates, justices of the peace, arbitrators, judges in criminal and civil courts, lay assessors in criminals, expert judges as in juvenile, commercial or agricultural matters.

4. The European Network of Associations of Lay Judges promotes the participation of citizens in justice systems.

5. The Hungarian organisation Magyar Ülnöki Egyesület is a member of the network and Melinda Vágány held the position of President of ENALJ from 2014-2017. In addition, the Hungarian organisation hosted the European Day of Lay Judges 2014 in Budapest. ENALJ appreciated the Hungarian organization taking this role as it strengthened the role of civic participation in Hungary and throughout Europe. We were disappointed to learn of the plans to weaken the role of lay judges in Hungary.


6. Therefore it was agreed to refer this common statement from the European Association of Lay Judges to all institutions concerned:

- President of the Republic of Hungary
- Chairman of Council of Ministers, Hungary
- Ministry of Justice of Hungary
- Chair of the Committee on Civil Liberties and Justice at the European Parliament
- Chairman of the Committee of the Justice Parliament of Hungary

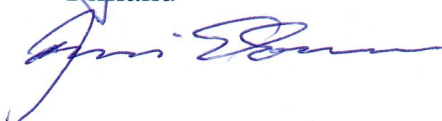
Austria



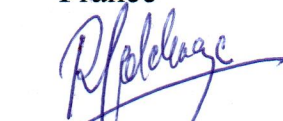
Belgium



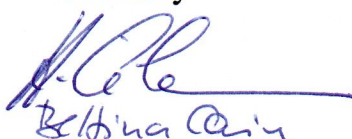
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France

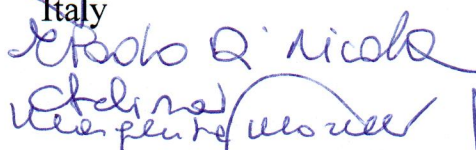


Germany



Melinda Vágány

Italy

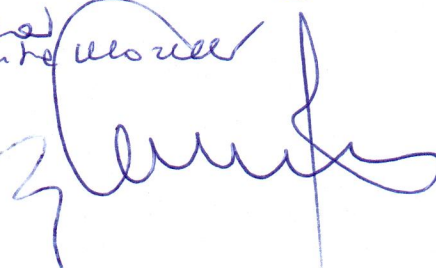


Roberto D'Amico

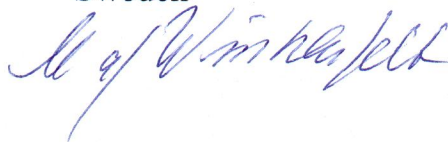
Northern Ireland



Poland



Sweden



Switzerland

