



ASSOCIATION EUROPÉENNE DES AVOCATS
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF LAWYERS

2025 REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

European Presidents Conference

Vienna, February 2026

Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends,

I have the pleasure to present to you the Report on the activities of the AEA-EAL in 2025.

It was a busy year for our Association. AEA-EAL organized and co-organized numerous conferences and webinars, continued the Mentoring Program, our representatives attended various events as speakers or guests. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Immediate Past President, Mrs. Maria Ślżzak, and the board members for their unwavering trust and efforts, which have greatly contributed to the professional advancement of lawyers worldwide.

The AEA-EAL was co-organizer of two large international conferences – one in Tbilisi, Georgia on the Convention for the Protection of the profession of lawyers and the second in Gdansk, Poland regarding the environmental. We also organized various events, and engaged in joint initiatives as well as continuing ongoing projects.

Hereby I would like to thank all our members and friends for their contribution in the works of our organization.

David Asatiani

President



AEA-EAL signed the MoU with the New York State Bar Association (NYSBA)

On 28 April, 2025 the European Association of Lawyers (AEA-EAL) and the New York State Bar Association (NYSBA) signed the Memorandum of Understanding to formalize a partnership, which will provide a framework for the members of the two associations to share information on issues such as trade, environmental justice, and human rights.

NYSBA was represented by the President Domenick Napoletano, as well as Jay Safer and Giorgi Tshekhiani, while AEA-EAL was represented by the President David Asatiani and the Immediate Past President Maria Ślżzak.

This MOU represents a shared commitment to fostering international collaboration, promoting the rule of law, and supporting professional development opportunities for legal professionals across jurisdictions.



Alternative Dispute Resolution Conference 2025!

LAWASIA, in collaboration with The Law Society of Singapore, successfully presented the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Conference 2025, held on 22–23 May 2025. The Conference provided an in-depth exploration of the evolving role of ADR in today's dynamic legal landscape, bringing together leading practitioners, academics, and policymakers from across jurisdictions.

The AEA-EAL participated in the event as a Supporting Partner.



International Scientific-Practical Conference “The Human Rights Lawyers’ Movement and the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer: Theoretical Aspects, Best Practices, and New Challenges” was Held in Vilnius, Lithuania

On June 20, 2025, a high-level scientific-practical conference titled “The Human Rights Lawyers’ Movement and the Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer: Theoretical Aspects, Best Practices, and New Challenges.” was held in Vilnius, Lithuania. The conference brought together leading legal professionals, scholars, and institutional representatives from across Europe both in person and online.

The event was dedicated to advancing discourse surrounding the recently adopted **Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer**, placing particular emphasis on its significance, implementation mechanisms, and implications for the independence and safety of lawyers within member states.

Distinguished speakers included Mr. **David Asatiani**, President of the Association Européenne des Avocats (AEA-EAL), **Mrs. Maria Śluzak**, Immediate Past President of the Association, and **Mr. Nielson Sánchez-Stewart**, Vice President of AEA-EAL, each of whom contributed valuable perspectives on the evolving challenges and responsibilities facing the legal profession.

The Conference concluded with a strong reaffirmation of the critical importance of upholding the independence and security of the legal profession as a cornerstone of democratic societies and the rule of law.



President of the European Association of Lawyers (AEA-EAL) Delivered a Speech at Tashkent Law Spring 2025

David Asatiani, President of the European Association of Lawyers (AEA-EAL), delivered a speech at the fourth edition of the Tashkent Law Spring, a leading international legal forum held annually in Uzbekistan, gathering legal professionals, academics, and business representatives from over 40 countries.

Speaking on the topic "Digital Advocacy: Overcoming Geographical and Legal Barriers," Mr. Asatiani explored the profound impact of digital transformation on the legal profession and the need to adapt while safeguarding core values of justice.

Highlighting the structural changes within the profession, President Asatiani pointed to the growing use of e-Justice systems - including digital case management, remote hearings, and electronic document exchange - which have enhanced efficiency and broadened access to justice, particularly in remote areas.

He also emphasized both the opportunities and risks associated with new technologies, including artificial intelligence: “While innovation expands our capabilities, it also raises ethical and regulatory challenges. We must ensure that independence, confidentiality, and professional integrity remain uncompromised in the digital age.”

Mr. Asatiani reaffirmed AEA-EAL’s commitment to guiding its members through this transformation and stressed the importance of coordinated international efforts to develop common standards for legal tech.



Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer

AEA-EAL continued to actively promote the the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Legal Profession, highlighting its importance as a cornerstone for safeguarding the independence and security of lawyers across Europe.

In 2024, AEA-EAL was represented in the work of the CDCJ Committee of Experts and Observers on the Protection of the Profession of a Lawyer (CJ-AV) through Ms Maria Sluzak, who participated as an expert and observer. This engagement enabled AEA-EAL to contribute to the discussions and to remain directly involved in the Convention’s development at the Council of Europe level.



Election of new Member of the Board of Directors

On July 10, 2025, the Annual General Assembly of the European Association of Lawyers (AEA-EAL) was held, during which a new member of the Board of Directors was elected. Mr. Michał Widawski, Attorney at Law (Radca Prawny) and member of the Gdańsk Bar Association of Attorneys at Law (Poland), has joined the Board of AEA-EAL.



Second Edition of AEA-EAL- EYBA Mentoring Program Successfully Concluded

The second edition of the joint Mentoring Program by the European Association of Lawyers (AEA-EAL) and the European Young Bar Association (EYBA) has officially concluded.

Launched in 2023, the program connects young lawyers with experienced mentors across Europe, fostering intergenerational exchange, professional guidance, and the promotion of best standards in the legal profession.

This edition featured six mentor-mentee pairs from countries including Moldova, Turkey, Kazakhstan, France, Poland, Switzerland, Armenia, Scotland, England, and Lithuania, providing a unique space for dialogue, learning, and personal growth.

Global Conference in Hamburg, Germany

In line with efforts to strengthen transatlantic cooperation, AEA-EAL members were invited to participate in the NYSBA International Section 2025 Global Conference, held on 15–17 October 2025 at Le Méridien Hotel, Hamburg, Germany.

The Global Conference, recognized as a premier international gathering of legal professionals, brought together practitioners from Europe, the United States, and beyond. The three-day program featured high-level panel discussions on key topics in international law and practice, including arbitration and dispute resolution, trade and cross-border investment, artificial intelligence and the law, diversity in the legal profession, and ethics and professional responsibility.

In addition to the panels, participants had the opportunity to engage in networking events, including the Welcome Reception at the Hamburg Parliament, the Legal Dine-Around hosted by local firms, and the Gala Reception and Dinner at the International Maritime Museum.

The conference provided an excellent platform for AEA-EAL members to exchange expertise, foster cooperation with U.S. colleagues, and expand their international networks. Limited scholarships and discounts were made available to support participation.



AEA-EAL President, David Asatiani, Delivered speech at International Legal Conference in Moldova

On October 12, David Asatiani, President of the European Association of Lawyers (AEA-EAL), delivered a speech at the international conference “The Independent Legal Profession – A Pillar of the Rule of Law” in Chişinău, Moldova.

He highlighted contemporary challenges in the legal profession, emphasizing unity, independence, international solidarity, and the importance of initial and continuous legal training for maintaining professional standards.

The event brought together Bar Association Presidents from France, Belgium, Poland, Ukraine, Germany, and Romania, providing a platform for exchange and networking. Discussions also focused on the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer and the need for its ratification across Europe.



Conference “Die Schweiz in Europa und der Welt”, Bern, Switzerland, October 9, 2025

The University of Bern, in collaboration with the European Association of Lawyers (AEA-EAL), invites participants to the annual **Market Access Conference** titled “*Die Schweiz in Europa und der Welt*”. The conference provided a platform for legal experts, academics, and professionals to discuss Switzerland’s market access, international economic relations, and regulatory frameworks within Europe and globally.



Die Schweiz in Europa und der Welt

Michael Hahn & Philipp Zurkinden
Chatham House

09.10.2025, Universität Bern (IEW/WTI), Hallenstrasse 6, Bern

International Conference organized by GBA-AEA-EAL, November 8, 2025 in Tbilisi, Georgia

The European Association of Lawyers (AEA-EAL), in partnership with the Georgian Bar Association, organized international conference titled: “The Convention for the Protection of the Legal Profession as an Effective Pathway to Safeguarding the Rule of Law.”

The event focused on the role of the Council of Europe Convention in protecting the independence of lawyers and strengthening the rule of law, bringing together experts and representatives from national and international legal communities for exchange and discussion.

The conference was attended by leaders of bar associations from various countries, the President of the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), the President of LAWASIA, the Deputy Head of the Council of Europe’s Georgia Office, and an expert from the Council of Europe’s Working Group on the Protection of Lawyers (CJ-AV).



International Conference - Environmental Protection Law

On October 24, 2025, the University of Gdańsk hosted the International Conference on “The Right to an Adequate Quality Environment and Its Protection: Perspectives of the Public Sector, Entrepreneurs and Individuals.”

The conference brought together 20 distinguished speakers from around the world — including representatives from Indonesia, France, Belgium, and Georgia — spanning academia, legal practice,

government, NGOs, and the business sector. Among the speakers were representatives of the Council of Europe, the European Court of Human Rights, and the European Association of Lawyers (AEA-EAL). AEA-EAL was represented by Immediate Past President Maria Ślężak, Chairman of the Sustainable Development Law Commission Giorgi Tshekhani, Attorney at Law Magdalena Witkowska, and Attorney at Law Patrick Van Cauwenberghe.

Beyond the formal sessions, participants enjoyed valuable opportunities for **networking and exchange**, exploring avenues for future cooperation. The conference underscored the crucial role of **collaboration among academia, lawyers, NGOs, and governmental institutions** in advancing environmental protection - a key challenge for the legal profession in the 21st century.

