

## **Minutes of the ELI Membership Meeting**

**6 September 2022, Hybrid**

**Venue:** University Carlos III of Madrid

**Chair:** Pascal Pichonnaz (ELI President)

Keeper of the minutes: Laura Papasodaro (ELI Secretariat)

The meeting commenced at 14:30 (CET).

### **I. Welcome and Opening Address**

- (1) Pascal Pichonnaz opened the meeting by welcoming those present. He observed that the European Law Institute (ELI) had proven resilient over the last year. He expressed joy at the fact that this Annual Conference would be the occasion to meet in person; something that everyone had been missing for the last three years.
- (2) Pichonnaz thanked his colleagues in the Executive Committee (Lord John Thomas, Anne Birgitte Gammeljord, Pietro Sirena, Bénédicte Fauvarque-Cosson, Teresa Rodríguez de las Heras Ballell, Aneta Wiewiórowska-Domagalska). The Executive Committee has now completed its first year in office and has worked intensely to improve ELI and its impact. He outlined the Executive's work but also thanked the Scientific Director, Christiane Wendehorst, for devoting herself to this new role and for following every single ELI project, current and prospective.
- (3) Pichonnaz thanked Manuel A Bermejo Castrillo for his help in the organisation of the Conference and handed over a gift as a token of ELI's recognition of his hard work.

### **II. Report from the President and Executive Committee**

- (4) Pichonnaz gave an overview of the above mentioning, among other things, that the Executive Committee has tried to extend ELI's relationship with other organisations.
- (5) Pichonnaz reported that ELI has reinforced its relationship with the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) by signing a Memorandum of Understanding. It has intensified its relationship with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), and benefits from a very close relationship with the EU. Pichonnaz also mentioned the regular meetings the ELI leadership conducts with representatives of the various EU directorates to exchange knowledge and information.

- (6) He invited Members to read the Report to appreciate the extent of dissemination activities that are undertaken by the Executive Committee and that organised by the Secretariat in cooperation with ELI project teams.

### **III. Brief Report from the Treasurer**

- (7) Pietro Sirena commenced by thanking the Secretary General and Senior Finance & Membership Officer for their support on budgetary matters. He went on to give an overview of the above stating that ELI's financial resources are quite stable and that the Council had already approved the 2021 accounts and the 2023 draft budget.
- (8) Sirena presented ELI's 2021 financial position. He explained, in light of the surplus made as a result of the pandemic, that Deloitte Austria recommended that minor adjustments be made to ELI's Statutes. The revised Statute was approved by the Council in February 2022 and has since been uploaded onto the ELI website.
- (9) Sirena reported that unpaid Membership and event fees still appear on the accounts, but that the Secretariat was doing everything possible to recover those amounts. He encouraged everyone to sign up to SEPA to avoid missing payments and the unpleasant surprise of receiving a termination letter.
- (10) A Member suggested that ELI introduce a life-long fee, to which Sirena responded that he would be happy to discuss the matter with the Executive Committee.

### **IV. Overview of ELI Projects and Similar Initiatives**

- (11) Lord John Thomas commenced by stressing that ELI has three types of outputs: projects, responses to consultations, and innovation papers. He said that ELI projects are organised under three umbrellas and that several projects have been completed recently, many of which have had a substantial impact.
- (12) Lord Thomas explained that in order to try to improve the way ELI does things, the role of Scientific Director was established in 2021 and that the ELI is trying to persuade more people to give their feedback on how matters are progressing at ELI, as self-criticism is very important.
- (13) Lord Thomas emphasised that ELI will be looking more at dissemination in order to make sure that ELI's outputs are impactful.
- (14) He said that there is plenty of scope for Members to be involved in current substantive ELI work and stressed that it is also important for ELI to have Membership feedback when new projects are being selected. In short, ELI looks to its Membership for guidance.

- (15) Members are welcome to send emails to the Secretariat expressing their thoughts on new projects.

#### **V. Report of the Membership Committee**

- (16) Teresa Rodríguez de las Heras Ballell reported that at the moment ELI has 1,776 Members, of which 1,649 are Individual Members and 127 are Institutional Members. She mentioned that ELI has tripled the number of Individual Members in its 11 years.
- (17) Rodríguez de las Heras Ballell said that the top five countries of residence among ELI Members are Italy, Germany, Spain, UK and Austria, in the EU, and US, Japan, Russia, Brazil and Canada, outside the EU. Rodríguez de las Heras Ballell mentioned that ELI's Individual Membership base is composed for 53.3% of academics and their expertise is mainly in EU law, contract law, comparative law, consumer law and tort law. She explained that the ELI would like to enhance its representativeness and encourage people from under-represented jurisdictions, vocations and fields of law to join. She continued her Report.
- (18) A Member said that the option for Members to choose 'EU Law' as field of interest may be misleading as it is too broad and is often selected in addition to other categories.
- (19) In responding to a question on the advantages of being an Institutional Member, Pascal Pichonnaz replied that there are many and that they include access to projects prior to publication in the capacity as a member of the Members Consultative Committee, in particular, and the possibility to influence them, as well as networking possibilities. Both he and Rodríguez de las Heras Ballell explained that the ELI is also working on other incentives. Rodríguez de las Heras Ballell added that the numbers show that ELI's work is drawing interest and is influencing the development of law.

#### **VI. Report on Hubs and Special Interest Groups**

- (20) Aneta Wiewiórowska-Domagalska explained that Hubs and SIGs had been affected by the pandemic. She reported that at the moment ELI has 14 Hubs, with the UK one being on hold. She added that two new Hubs were established this year – the Ukrainian and Turkish Hubs – and that several are in the pipeline.
- (21) Wiewiórowska-Domagalska said that there are 11 SIGs at the moment, of which one is dormant – the Fundamental Rights SIG. She reported that Digital Law is the biggest SIG.

- (22) Wiewiórowska-Domagalska concluded by underlining the need for less active Hubs and SIGs to take advantage of digital platforms and that there are some funds for Hubs and SIGs to apply for. She invited Members to propose new SIGs.

**VII. Closing Remarks and Any Other Business**

- (23) Pascal Pichonnaz thanked Manuel A Bermejo Castrillo again for all his work.
- (24) He also thanked each member of the ELI Secretariat for the invaluable work they have done throughout the year, but especially in preparing this year's annual conference.

The meeting ended at 15:30 (CET).