HIGHLIGHTS OF THE HYBRID INTERNATIONAL WEEKEND 2021

BY SUZANNE EAMES

The last two years of Covid restrictions have prevented many junior lawyers from meeting up with their colleagues in person. It was therefore all the more exciting that International Weekend could take place as a hybrid event on 25 September 2021 in Middle Temple, London.

(continues on p. 12)
GET TO KNOW EYBA MEMBERS

Confederación Española de la Abogacía Joven
Spanish Confederation of Young Lawyers

About us

CEAJ is the Spanish national organisation of young lawyers. The confederation was founded in 1976, and nowadays it is composed of 74 young lawyers bar associations and federations, representing approximately 60,000 young lawyers across the whole country.

Our mission and goals

- Defend the interests of young lawyers in different institutions.
- Coordinate actions between the young lawyers associations which form part of the confederation.
- Promote and defend the role of young lawyers in the legal ecosystem, giving our say on different legal initiatives affecting us.
- Offer online and in-person training sessions to the Spanish community of young lawyers.
- Develop professional cooperation at national and international level.
- Defend and claim better conditions for young lawyers in their access to a professional career.

EYBA experiences

As noted, one of our goals is opening the frontiers of the Spanish young lawyers to Europe. On that front, we are very happy to be part of the European Young Bar Association, and of the EYBA Research Committee, represented by Borja Llonín, so we can work hand in hand to achieve the goals set by the EYBA.

Recent results

CEAJ recently achieved the goal of having a two-week holiday that coincides with the Christmas period, according to the claim of the President, Maia Roman, who sent a letter to the Minister of Justice, in the name of the Spanish confederation of young lawyers. This measure will support a better work-life balance.
What we provide to young lawyers:

GAJ offers young lawyers quality, continuous and usually free practical training and, at the same time, by encouraging their participation, it constitutes a platform for initiatives and projects of a legal-social-cultural nature in the form of round tables, conferences and debates of various kinds. GAJ also encourages the participation of young lawyers in the Catalan civil society, which they are part of, cooperating with non-profit organizations as well. Likewise, young lawyers can benefit from support systems, such as the tutoring system for accessing the Legal Aid Service or the grants and financial advantages that GAJ provides.

GAJ publishes a quarterly paper and on-line magazine so-called the “Speaker”, and a weekly on-line newsletter, so-called “e-Speaker”. Moreover, GAJ is a meeting point for the exchange of experiences, opinions and concerns among young lawyers, which is also materialized from a recreational and festive perspective, taking advantage of these events, for example, to make the charity campaigns carried out successful, for which it counts on the invaluable participation of all the members of the ICAB.

Who we work with:

To achieve its objectives, GAJ works jointly and actively with the association 'Joves Advocats de Catalunya (JAC)' and with the Spanish Confederation of Young Lawyers (CEAJ) and, since March 2004, it has been a collaborating member of the 'Consell Nacional de la Joventut de Catalunya' (National Youth Council of Catalonia). Additionally, at an international level, GAJ is an active member of the European Young Lawyers Association (EYBA), where it held the presidency for the mandate from 2015 to 2016 and where it is now represented by Carmen del Castillo Vericat, executive officer of the Board.
91% of Irish solicitors expressed a preference for a hybrid working model in future, with 5% wanting to work at home full time and 4% preferring full-time office work.

69% of Irish solicitors feel more productive when working at home.

64% of Irish solicitors will make career decisions based on remote or hybrid working policies.

70% of Irish solicitors see feelings of isolation from colleagues as a challenge with working remotely.

The Law Society of Ireland’s Younger Members Committee (YMC) have been busy in recent months with a number of diverse and interesting projects! Our annual conference, at the end of 2021, considered what the life and work of a lawyer might look like in the year 2050. Panellists included the Chief Justice, a former managing partner of a top 10 firm and a sports nutritionist.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our survey sub-committee, the results of ‘The Future Way We Work’ survey were launched in October 2021. Some key findings from the survey indicated:

- 91% of Irish solicitors expressed a preference for a hybrid working model in future, with 5% wanting to work at home full time and 4% preferring full-time office work.
- 69% of Irish solicitors feel more productive when working at home.
- 64% of Irish solicitors will make career decisions based on remote or hybrid working policies.
- 70% of Irish solicitors see feelings of isolation from colleagues as a challenge with working remotely.

On a personal note, Aisling Woods, Avril Flannery & Maeve Delargy welcomed baby girls in the last year, and wedding bells were ringing for Brendan Hayes and Mike Quinlan. Congratulations to all!

The Committee’s 2022 strategy is focused around four pillars:

- to work with partners to implement recommendations from the ‘Future Way we Work’ Survey 2021;
- to work with partners on issues relating to access to the legal profession;
- to work with colleagues to enhance awareness of Law Society membership benefits and Law Society structures; and
- to continue to foster links with peer organisations in Ireland and other jurisdictions.

Our Spring Series will commence shortly, covering topics such as public interest law in Ireland, possible changes to cannabis legislation and an overview of the current Irish legal jobs market. The sessions will also look at workplaces bullying, from both awareness and prevention perspectives.

After over two years of meetings through Zoom, the YMC are hoping to return to in-person meetings in the coming months, especially for those all-important coffee and chats pre- and post-meetings!

Similarly, we hope to attend EYBA events across Europe in the coming year and we are really looking forward to building links within the EYBA.
Our projects

Each month, the FNUJA committee meets and brings together the local young lawyers volunteers. These groups also form commissions covering a variety of subjects of interest to the legal profession, including criminal defence, young lawyers’ interests, international relations, minors’ rights, career development and digital communication. The FNUJA’s main objective is to communicate with and participate in the administration of justice and contribute to the law elaboration in France, with regard to any aspect of the law and particularly where it touches the exercise of the legal profession.

EYBA experience

FNUJA has been a member of the EYBA for several years and its members regularly attend EYBA Conferences. Moreover, FNUJA representatives are, respectively, member of EYBA Research Committee and member of the EYBA Audit Committee.

About us

The Fédération Nationales des Unions des Jeunes Avocats (National Federation of Young Lawyers’ Associations – hereafter FNUJA) was created in 1947 by Henri DELMONT, to unite the Young Lawyers’ Associations around the country, and to promote the creation of such associations in bars where the young lawyers weren’t represented.

We are an apolitical, professional, non-profit union representing young lawyers’ association from all over France.

The FNUJA has always been a federation which promotes and defends the interests of the young lawyers, in their bars and at a national level, to the institutions and political organisations.

The members of the FNUJA are the local young lawyer associations, as well as individual members from bars where there is no association. The President is elected once a year, traditionally in May, during the annual Congress, and is supported by a committee, which is composed of half members of the Paris Young Lawyers Association and half from members of Young Lawyers Associations from other bars.

Members must be under the age of 40 to be elected as President or Committee member, or to represent the FNJUA in any national election. The age limitation ensures the regular renewal of the members and the executive committee and President, which helps guarantee the constant representation of young lawyers’ interests.


Website: https://www.fnuja.com/
FB: FNUJA – Les Jeunes Avocats
Instagram: @FNUJA
THE EXPERIENCE OF A YOUTH DELEGATE

BY IORDANIS CHOROZOGLOU

Introduction

In 2018, the EYBA was granted participatory status at the Conference of INGOs (Independent Non-governmental Organisations) of the Council of Europe (hereinafter, CINGO). Through this recognition, the Council of Europe includes INGOs in its intergovernmental activities and encourages dialogue between the members of Parliament, local and regional authorities, and those of the recognized INGOs on the various challenges faced by society.

In 2020 in line with its “Roadmap for youth participation”, the CINGO has invited 4 young persons, representing their member INGO, to Strasbourg, to take an active part, as youth delegates, in its sessions in April and October. I submitted my application through the EYBA and I was accepted!

My fellow delegates were young activists from different countries [Armenia (Grigor Yeritsyan), Hungary (Krisztina Korpassy) and Italy (Giada Negri)] and fields [environment, politics, sociology].

Online activities

The young delegates attended - online - both of the CINGOs’ sessions of 2020. Moreover, we were asked to assist in various tasks. Apart from our active participation in CINGO, and our support whenever it was asked, we organized together with Rareș Crăișăuți, Rapporteur for the Conference of INGOs, a series of Online Events.

So far, we organized in October 2020 an event on diversity in the CINGO and in March 2021 an event on self and collective care and now we are planning to organize another one for March 2022. In both events many people from Europe, as well as from other continents, took part and exchanged their ideas and experiences. In these events I had the honour to be chosen from my co-young delegates to be the moderator.

Our engagement and our efforts were recognized by the Council of Europe. For this reason, our services were extended for one more year.
In-person experience

In October 2021 I had the honour to attend in person the General Assembly of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe. People of NGOs all around Europe had a very fruitful discussion about many topics such as the situation in Belarus with the new wave of asylum seekers, in Poland, the function of the CINGO and new Committees in CINGO. There was also interest in our Association since there was a discussion about the protection of colleagues that are not members of any Bar Association.

In November 2021, the World Forum for Democracy took place in Strasbourg. The Conference of INGOs had representatives in this forum and I had the honour to be one of them.

It was one of the most exciting and interesting events I ever took part in. People from - literally - all around the globe to discuss one very interesting and important topic: Can Democracy save the environment?

A 3-day long forum with many experts of all fields and with enthusiastic and active delegates - citizens and politicians - of highly important and of course with very useful outcomes on this very crucial topic. Council of Europe has always been promoting democracy, human rights, solidarity and generally the pan-European values and it was an honour and a blessing to be an active part of it. I had the opportunity to exchange my ideas and my experiences with people that share the same interests, awareness and values from different places and fields and this diversity has enlightened not only my knowledge but my spirit as well.

Lastly, I would like to mention once again how thankful I am to EYBA for that lifetime experience!
Being a Young Delegate was a unique experience, and I am of the opinion that EYBA should support the program and encourage its members to take part in it.

I would recommend all our members to apply for that Program!

About the author
Iordanis Chorozoglou, Attorney at Law in Greece and the Vice President of Thessaloniki Young Bar Trainee Lawyer’s Association that is member of the European Young Bar Association.
MOVING IN-HOUSE AS A YOUNG LAWYER

BY JENNIFER O’SULLIVAN

Introduction

The recruitment of qualified lawyers in-house has grown exponentially over the last 10 years and will continue to do so. Moreover, there is a growing trend for younger lawyers migrating in-house from private practice. As a young lawyer who moved in-house early on in my career (6 months post qualification), information around the move in-house was not readily available and contributed to my anxiety in leaving the safe cocoon of private practice.

I recall my concerns around lack of resources, lack of support and guidance, as well as the sheer responsibility of operating as a business partner with no real commercial experience. Whilst many of those fears did come to fruition, through time and experience (as well as reaching out to colleagues), I learnt to manage and enjoy the role. In this article, I want to share a few insights which may assist younger members who are thinking of making the move in-house.

The ring master of legal risk

As an in-house counsel, your primary role is to assist in controlling legal risk at all levels of the business. Concurrently, you are a facilitator or a ‘business partner’ in assisting the business to achieve its strategic objectives.

These factors contribute to the conflict that will dictate your day-to-day tasks. On the one hand, you are expected to drive the business forward ensuring profitability and targets are met, yet at the same time, your priority as a trusted legal adviser is in the mitigation of legal risk which may hinder or delay a project. This balancing act will require that you continually call upon your communication, project management and commercial awareness skills.

Overtime, you will learn how to quickly assess risk and the legal impact of new projects. This blend of lawyer is sometimes referred to as the ‘T-shaped’ lawyer i.e. a lawyer who has a deep expertise in one discipline, together with various competencies and skills and knowledge from other areas, that helps them collaborate with specialists from different disciplines to innovate for the organisation as a whole.

Responsibility

From the get-go, you are expected to manage your tasks and your client independently and efficiently. Even with a head of legal to report to, you are expected to lead projects, make decisions, and source and manage external law firms. This may seem daunting at first, but like anything in life, it just takes a little practice! You may find yourself involved in matters outside of your job description or providing advice which is non-legal i.e. on the efficient management of projects based on your inter-disciplinary knowledge. This is not only practical but means your role is a seriously valuable linchpin for the organisation (and if you are anyway entrepreneurial, thoroughly enjoyable). The risk of course is that legal can become overly involved in various tasks outside the scope of legal assistance – the internal legal function should be wary of its boundaries. As such, there is an added responsibility in communicating the internal legal policy to stakeholders i.e. the process for contractual review and maintenance, the process of legal risk and the correct and most efficient ways to manage projects requiring legal input. Soon enough the stakeholders will begin to integrate legal risks into their decisions (if they haven’t done so already!) and you will become a force in the proper management of the business.
Cost centre versus profit centre

A mind-set shift required early on is the cost savings versus cost creating model. In private practice, the billable hour centric approach will no longer serve you as cost reduction will now become the driver of profit.

Cost includes not just external legal providers but also the move toward legal technology which can greatly assist in the management of legal risk. You will learn how to price work, understand the domestic legal marketplace as well as innovations in legal technology all of which will assist you in effectively carrying out your role.

You're no longer special

The specialist lawyer might find themselves having an identity crisis in-house. Even if you are a technology lawyer joining a technology firm, I am 99% sure you will be doing other areas outside of your comfort zone. You will need to become familiar with the laws and regulations that apply to your business sector as well as maintaining your speciality. Commercial contracts, data protection, employment law, property law, litigation and corporate governance are some of the many components you can expect to see as part of your day-to-day work. Be wary though, the list of legal practice areas in-house is never ending and therein lies the challenge! You will learn to adapt to different areas of law and as the business grows, these areas may become more or less relevant as the business evolves. The buck stops with you though (and indeed, the head of legal) when it comes to upskilling, training (CPD) and horizon scanning to keep your legal armoury sharp and agile.

On a final note, best of luck if you are intending to move in-house. Embrace the challenge, reach out to colleagues for assistance if you need it, and know that you are an essential business partner contributing to the lifeblood of the business!

About the author

Legal Counsel, Volkswagen Group and Financial Services Ireland
Founder, Law Hero
Member, EYBA Research Committee
Member, Young Members Committee, Law Society of Ireland
ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE AT A GLANCE
A quick overview of Regulation EU n. 910/2014 while waiting its reform

BY PIERPAOLO PICARELLI

Introduction
No matter what area of law you are involved in, identity checks and signatures of documents are daily routine for lawyers. You are probably already well aware of your national regulation regarding the matter, but maybe you have some doubts when facing digitally signed documents from foreign individuals. Nevertheless, if the document is digitally signed by a national of a EU Member State, such piece of (electronic) paper might have the same legal value of an handwritten signature.

Legal effects of electronic signatures are set out by Regulation EU n. 910/2014 (from now on, “eIDAS”) and they are the same all over EU, despite minor differences that might be introduced at national level.

This article just offers a general overview of electronic signature under eIDAS, reminding readers what are the common rules, so that next time you deal with a document with a foreign electronic signature you will be able to check the validity of the signature.

Furthermore, eIDAS has recently been examined by EU institutions in order to plan an overall revision of its provisions (1), this article is also meant to sum up the main feature of the subject before its reform: the best way to learn new pieces of legislation is to have a sound knowledge of the previous discipline!

Definitions
Electronic signature is defined in broad terms by eIDAS as a set of electronic data used to sign (see the complete definition set out by art. 3, n. 10, eIDAS). A signature only complying with such requirements is also known as simple electronic signature.

The two other kind of electronic signatures are:
1. the advanced electronic signature (from now on “advanced signature” or “AdES”);  
2. the qualified electronic signature (from now on “qualified signature” or “QES”).

The latter is an evolution of the advanced signature and it is considered the most reliable form of signature, as it is based on a qualified certificate and it is created by a qualified signature device, which is not necessarily a physical tool in the hands of the user.

Qualified certificates and devices are issued by trusted service providers approved by the national authority of each Member State (2).

Under the provisions of art. 26 eIDAS a qualified signature "shall have the equivalent legal effect of a handwritten signature" and it has to be recognised as such in all EU Member States. Since eIDAS is a EU regulation, its provision are directly applicable in all the Member States, therefore it represents a piece of uniform legislation on the subject.

If you need to verify a signature of an individual of another EU Member State you can use the ETSI Signature Conformance Checker, a free tool available online on the Connecting European Facility provided by the European Commission, here is the link: https://ec.europa.eu/cefdigital/wiki/display/CEFDIGITAL/ETSI+Signature+ConformanceChecker
in a nutshell, an electronic signature is a bunch of digital data added to an electronic document; just looking at the document it could not be possible to understand whether it is electronically signed, but a specific tool is required; lots of software used to view documents send an alert when a document may be electronically signed, but not all these software can be used to check the signature; even if the electronic signature is represented on the document by a symbol or a graphic signature, this does not constitute a proof on the validity of the electronic signature which has to be checked with a specific tool; it is not possible to check the validity of an electronic signature on a piece of paper, therefore if the electronically signed document is printed, that copy cannot be considered as a signed document.

Future perspectives
Looking at the future perspectives, last June the European Commission drafted a proposal for a regulation amending eIDAS (3).

The current version of the text does not seem to amend dramatically the discipline of electronic signature, but it introduces an explicit reference to “remote electronic qualified signature creation device”, confirming the possibility of using a qualified signature without having a physical device in your hands, as is already the case in some Member States.

Keep in mind that ...

- in a nutshell, an electronic signature is a bunch of digital data added to an electronic document;
- just looking at the document it could not be possible to understand whether it is electronically signed, but a specific tool is required;
- lots of software used to view documents send an alert when a document may be electronically signed, but not all these software can be used to check the signature;
- even if the electronic signature is represented on the document by a symbol or a graphic signature, this does not constitute a proof on the validity of the electronic signature which has to be checked with a specific tool;
- it is not possible to check the validity of an electronic signature on a piece of paper, therefore if the electronically signed document is printed, that copy cannot be considered as a signed document.

[2] Check out the list of trust service providers for each Member State: https://esignature.ec.europa.eu/efda/tl-browser/#/screen/home

About the author
Pier Paolo is an Italian trainee lawyer and PhD candidate, his main area of interest is commercial and company law, with a focus on the impact of new technologies on regulatory matters.
Member of the EYBA Research Committee.
Member of the Rome Young Bar Association.
Catherine Bamford then talked about how legal technology is changing the practice of law. This topic was very wide ranging and considered everything from how we can use technology to assist our practice, to the dangers of burnout and the mental health consequences the technology can bring.

The last two years of Covid restrictions have prevented many junior lawyers from meeting up with their colleagues in person. It was therefore all the more exciting that International Weekend could take place as a hybrid event on 25 September 2021 in Middle Temple. International Weekend was a collaboration between various legal communities: the Junior Lawyers Division, the European Young Bar Association, the Middle Temple Young Barristers’ Association, the London Young Lawyers Group and the Young Barristers’ Committee of the Bar Council.

First, we heard from I. Stephanie Boyce, the President of the Law Society of England and Wales, who spoke about the importance of our international relationships. This is something which truly shines through, when we look at how many delegates attended from across Europe!

We then heard from Andrew Smith QC about the use of virtual courts. This is something which every jurisdiction in the world has had to grapple with over the pandemic, and it was fascinating to hear the pros and cons of the English & Welsh system compared to those across the world.

Catherine Bamford then talked about how legal technology is changing the practice of law. This topic was very wide ranging and considered everything from how we can use technology to assist our practice, to the dangers of burnout and the mental health consequences the technology can bring.

One of the most exciting talks of the day was from Baroness Helena Kennedy QC and Professor Johannes Chan SC, who spoke about lawyers at risk. Baroness Kennedy is highly involved with efforts to help those who still remain in Afghanistan, and her passionate speech was inspiring. Meanwhile Professor Johannes Chan SC spoke from his experiences in Hong Kong, which was incredibly insightful to us all.

The talks were also broadcasted online for those who were unable to attend in person, which no doubt will be the future of conferences going forward for the foreseeable future.
Over lunch, the staff at Middle Temple spontaneously offered to give all delegates a tour of Middle Temple, along with a look at the history of the barristers’ profession. This was a surprise highlight of the day, with exciting stories such as seeing where the first production of Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night was performed.

Before sitting down to a fabulous black-tie dinner in Middle Temple, we heard from Thomas Grant QC, who gave a more light-hearted talk about jury trials.

It is a testament to the strength of our international relationships and our desire to connect in person that, even after the dinner had finished, delegates were not ready for the night to end. I for one found it to be incredibly refreshing to meet people in person again, and to laugh together after such a different year under restrictions. I can’t wait for International Weekend 2022!

Micheal Polak - Chair of Middle Temple Young Barristers Association and the Young Barristers’ Committee of the Bar Council

“It was brilliant to welcome lawyers from across Europe as well as our friends from the solicitors profession to Middle Temple for this event both in person and online. We were able to give a strong flavour of what Middle Temple is like both to those who attended the fantastic black tie dinner with Thomas Grant QC giving a talk on famous cases heard at the Old Bailey and those who took part online our virtual tour of the Inn. We hope that those who took part have fond memories of the Inn and come back to visit us in the future”

Oliver Haddock - Chair of the London Young Lawyers Group

“A huge success and a sign of things to come. The hybrid model was the best of both worlds. Huge thanks to our hosts, Middle Temple, and congratulations to all of the organisations. It’s amazing to see what can be done when collaborating on events like these”

Giulia Guagliardi - President of the European Young Bar Association

“The International Weekend in the last 2 years has marked important moments in the life of the EYBA: in London we had the last event in person in September 2019, before the outbreak of the Covid pandemic; the IW2020 has been our first virtual event and the IW2021 our first hybrid event. Now, I dream of an IW22 free from any restriction”.

About the author

Suzanna Eames is Chair of the Junior Lawyers Division of the Law Society of England & Wales
Environment and the Law

The topic for this year's conference is "Environment and the Law". This will include seminars on How concerns over the environment are affecting legal trends and legal practice and Upcoming legislative changes. Indeed, environment represents a priority in the public and political discussion, with several legal implications.

We will meet in Glasgow to explore how to become a more environmentally conscious lawyer. The same city where, a few months ago, nations took a range of decisions in the collective effort to limit global temperature.

The Seminars will be at the Royal Faculty of Procurators in Glasgow on the Friday and the Saturday. The Conference will count for up to 8 hours of CPD.

Across Glasgow

In addition to the seminars, attendees are welcome on the Thursday evening for a relaxed evening social gathering.

Moreover, delegates are invited to a Whisky Tasting on Friday 25th March and a Ceilidh on the evening of Saturday 26th March. This is a great opportunity to network and socialise after what has been a demanding and isolating last two years.

The Whisky Tasting will take place at the Clydeside Distillery. A light evening meal will be provided. The Ceilidh will take place in the Glasgow Science Centre. This will include traditional Scottish entertainment, full dinner and dancing.

All attendees will receive a “goody bag” of items provided by the Scottish Young Lawyers Association (SYLA) and sponsors. Attendees will also receive a conference brochure in PDF form in advance of the conference, which will provide full details of the conference, travel tips and contact details. EYBA and SYLA members benefit from a reduced fee for the conference.

If you are looking to make a group booking or would rather pay by alternative method (thereby avoiding the booking fee applied by Eventbrite) please email mail@syla.co.uk.
25 FEBRUARY 2022

STATEMENT
REGARDING THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

The European Young Bar Association expresses its deep concern about the tragic events underway and the ongoing escalation of violence in Ukraine.

The principles of democracy, protection of human rights and defence of the rule of law must be paramount in a civil society.

As European citizens, as European lawyers, we firmly condemn every threat to peace in violation of the fundamental principles of international law, that is now resulting in a terrible humanitarian crisis, on European soil. A threat to the peace of one country is a threat to global peace and it goes beyond the immediate.

We express our solidarity with the people of Ukraine and with our Ukrainian colleagues.

We deplore the loss of life and the human suffering.

We unwaveringly support the independence, sovereignty, right of self-determination and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

We support lawful actions to bring this conflict to an end as soon as possible.

We urge the international community to pursue every diplomatic effort to defuse tensions and achieve immediate de-escalation and to guarantee humanitarian assistance, because the protection of civilians must be a priority.

We must stand together at this time in our condemnation and our solidarity.

We stand with Ukraine.

Giulia Guagliardi, President of the EYBA
& Robert McTernaghan, on behalf of the EYBA CoE committee