

ELI President and Vices

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Vienna, 26 May 2025

Dear Minister Pakosta

We have a great pleasure of extending a formal invitation to you to participate in the invitation-only European Law Institute (ELI) High Level Forum on Democracy and Judicial Independence, which will take place online on **25 June 2025 from 12:00 to 14:00 CET**, or to nominate a representative of the Ministry of Justice of Estonia to attend.

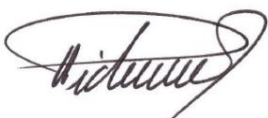
The High Level Forum, featuring a keynote speech by EU Commissioner for Democracy, Justice, the Rule of Law and Consumer Protection, Michael McGrath, will offer an opportunity to discuss ELI's recently published Charter of Fundamental Constitutional Principles of a European Democracy, available [here](#), and the ELI-Mount Scopus European Standards of Judicial Independence, available [here](#).

The Forum is convened in response to the growing challenges to democracy and the independence of the judiciary. The event provides a timely opportunity to address these urgent concerns, offering a space for expert deliberations on the fundamental principles underpinning democratic governance and judicial autonomy. Participants will include European Ministers of Justice, Presidents of Supreme and Constitutional Courts, international organisations, civil society representatives and other key stakeholders. By bringing together experts, policymakers, and international institutions, the forum aims to shape both national and regional legal and policy frameworks, ensuring the protection and strengthening of judicial independence and democratic values.

We would be greatly honoured if you were to accept our invitation for the Ministry of Justice of Estonia to be involved in the above event. We look forward to hearing from you **by 2 June 2025**. The ELI Secretariat team will be in touch, should you be available, with more detailed arrangements.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to invite you to ELI's Annual Conference, taking place from 21–24 September 2025 (more [here](#)). The event will focus, inter alia, on the pressing issues at the intersection of the environment and fundamental rights. We sincerely hope that you will be able to join us for what promises to be an engaging forum for actionable insights on legal reform and a valuable platform for knowledge-sharing on pressing legal and policy issues.

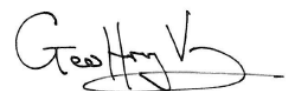
Yours sincerely



Prof Dr Pascal Pichonnaz
ELI President



Anne Birgitte Gammeljord
ELI First Vice President



Sir Geoffrey Vos
ELI Second Vice President

ELI Charter and Standards

- ELI Charter of Fundamental Constitutional Principles of a European Democracy

The ELI Charter of Fundamental Constitutional Principles of a European Democracy defines and articulates the constitutional principles that form the backbone of a European liberal democratic state. It serves as a reference point for legislatures, courts, civil society, and public authorities, offering clear guidance on what constitutes a genuine democracy grounded in the rule of law and fundamental rights. This Charter, which is set out in 36 Principles, is particularly significant in the current climate, where democratic backsliding threatens core values and governance structures. By providing a comprehensive framework covering essential principles – ranging from judicial independence and checks and balances to dignity, equality, and constitutional integrity – the Charter equips decision-makers with a solid foundation for legislative and constitutional reforms. It is a forward-looking document that also addresses contemporary challenges such as political extremism, media manipulation, and emerging issues like AI governance and sustainability.

- ELI-Mount Scopus European Standards of Judicial Independence

The ELI-Mount Scopus European Standards of Judicial Independence follow from the broader theme laid out in the ELI Charter of Fundamental Constitutional Principles of a European Democracy, but they focus on a more specific and critical aspect of democratic governance: the independence of the judiciary. The Standards respond directly to increasing political interference and government overreach affecting the judiciary. Judicial independence is not merely a principle; it is the cornerstone of a functioning democracy, ensuring fair trials, safeguarding human rights, and maintaining public trust in legal institutions. Developed through extensive consultation with judges, legal scholars, and key stakeholders, these 38 Standards offer a robust framework for assessing and protecting judicial independence across diverse legal systems in Europe. They complement existing international instruments, adapting them to the unique features of European judiciaries and career-based judicial systems.