

## Slovakia, Hungary and Poland How can strategic litigation protect Judicial Independence?

**Final Event of the Rule of Law for Lawyers (ROLL) project**

**15 January 2025**

**European Parliament and online**

*Today, judicial independence is under threat in a number of EU Member States. This is the case for instance in Hungary and Slovakia, while in Poland many issues related to judicial independence remain unresolved. There is therefore an increasing need to safeguard and defend judicial independence.*

The event will discuss the status quo for judicial independence in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia and present a report exploring how strategic litigation can be used to protect judicial independence in EU Member States. This Final Mapping Report – *Justice Under Pressure: Strategic Litigation Defending Judicial Independence in Europe* – aims to identify key obstacles, opportunities, and best practices for strategic litigation on judicial independence and accountability across the EU.

Two key questions will be explored regarding the intersection of judicial independence, strategic litigation, and the role of EU institutions:

- How can strategic litigation for judicial independence be strengthened?
- What is the role of the EU institutions in furthering judicial independence and supporting human rights and rule of law strategic litigation?

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### AGENDA

**14:30 Welcome and opening of the event**

- o Michał Wawrykiewicz, hosting MEP, Group of European People's Party (EPP)
- o Karolína Babická, Senior Legal Adviser, International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)

**14:35 Judicial independence in selected EU Member States** – Short presentations and discussions on selected countries

- o Hungary – Tineke Strik, MEP, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance
- o Poland – Michał Wawrykiewicz, MEP, EPP
- o Slovakia – Peter Čuroš, Lawyer, Via Iuris

Moderated by: Karolína Babická, ICJ

**15:30 Strategic litigation on judicial independence in Europe** – Presentation of the ROLL project Final Mapping Report and discussion

- o Helen Duffy, Human Rights professor, Director of Human Rights in Practice

16:00 **Further Discussion: Strengthening judicial independence and strategic litigation** – What role should EU institutions play?

- Sylwia Gregorczyk-Abram, Attorney, Co-Founder of the Free Courts Foundation
- Kazimierz Ujazdowski, Justice Coordinator, Permanent Representation of Poland to the EU
- Florian Geyer, Head of the Rule of Law Unit, DG JUST, European Commission

Moderated by: Natacha Kazatchkine, Rule of law and human rights Expert

16:30 **Closing**

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The **Rule of Law for Lawyers (ROLL) project** aims at fostering the effective use of strategic litigation for judicial independence in the EU by increasing the capacity of human rights lawyers and CSOs and enabling exchanges of new and best practices among them. The project also seeks to increase awareness and understanding of the importance and utility of the Rule of Law and use of strategic litigation to protect and promote it. The project is carried out between January 2023 and January 2025 by the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) in close cooperation with Human Rights in Practice and in collaboration with national partner organisations: aditus (Malta), Forum for Human Rights (Czechia and Slovakia) and Free Courts (Poland). This final event wraps up the project and presents some of its findings, allowing exchanges and exploring future needs and ways forward for the rule of law, judicial independence and strategic litigation in the EU.

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