

EUROPEAN CIRCUIT CONFERENCE 2026

hosted by Ilustre Colegio de Abogados de Málaga

24 & 25 September 2026

Kirsty Brimelow KC Chair Bar of England & Wales



Kirsty practises in criminal, international and public law from Doughty Street Chambers, where she is on the management board as head of the criminal law team. Kirsty was appointed QC (now KC) in 2011. She has the distinction of having led in both Civil and Criminal Courts of Appeal, the Supreme Court, the Privy Council, and the European Court of Human Rights. She was a member of the Bar Council Public Affairs Committee and a Bar Council Young Spokesperson from 1998 to 2008 and the first female Chair of the Bar Human Rights Committee (2012 to 2018) and served as the Vice Chair and then Chair of the Criminal Bar Association (2021 to 2023).

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Stéphane Haziza Member of the Paris Bar Council

Stéphane Haziza was admitted
to the Paris Bar on 5 February 1997.

In 2002, she was elected "Secrétaire de la
Conférence", one of the Paris Bar's most prestigious
distinctions for criminal defence lawyers.

Since 2023, she has been serving as a Member of the
Paris Bar Council (Conseil de l'Ordre), where she is
Secretary of the Criminal Law Commission and
Coordinator for Domestic Violence Matters.



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Michala Plachká

Vice-Chair, Czech Bar Association



Michala completed three years as a legal associate in the law firm Pyšný, Srba & Partneri in Ostrava. In 2019, she founded PURE Legal and has been the Managing Partner of the firm since 2020.

Since 2021, Míša has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Czech Bar Association. In 2025, she was re-elected as Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors of the Czech Bar Association.

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Séamus Clarke SC

forthcoming Chair of the
Council of The Bar of Ireland



Séamus Clarke SC is based at the Law Library in Dublin and practises mainly in public law, including criminal, constitutional and administrative law, as well as employment law. He is an arbitrator and mediator and a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (FCIArb). From 2020 to 2025, he served as a Director and member of the Board of Management of the Dublin Disputes Resolution Centre (DDRC). He has also held a number of senior leadership positions within The Bar of Ireland, including Vice-Chair and Treasurer of the Council.

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Adolfo Martos Gross

Martos & Gross

Adolfo has practised law for over 30 years, developing most of his professional career between Málaga and Marbella.

His practice focuses mainly on civil and commercial law, private international law, real estate and litigation. He has extensive experience in cross-border litigation cases. Since 2013, Adolfo has been the Coordinator of the International Section of the Málaga Bar Association, where he is involved in promoting relations and exchanges with lawyers and Bar associations from other jurisdictions. He also has considerable experience in legal training and has regularly participated in conferences, seminars and professional training activities, particularly in areas connected with international and cross-border legal practice. He also acts as an arbitrator at the Málaga Court of Arbitration.



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Noemí Alarcón Velasco

Noemí is an international lawyer and consultant specialising in human rights, EU law and migration.

She is the Vice-President of the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) and previously chaired its Migration Committee. She represents the CCBE before Frontex and the EU Agency for Asylum, and serves on the Spanish General Council of the Legal Profession's Immigration Subcommittee. A leading expert, she has coordinated advocacy for major legislation like the New EU Pact on Migration and Asylum. Additionally, she is a Council of Europe HELP Programme tutor, an expert consultant for projects in Armenia and Moldova, and a former FIAP Senior Consultant, widely publishing professional guidance manuals on international protection.



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Abigail Holt Barrister, Garden Court Chambers

Abigail Holt practises in personal injury, industrial disease and medical cases which includes cross-border litigation. She also has expertise in human rights and international protection work, with a particular interest in Afghanistan, as well as employment law. She is on the list of Court Examiners appointed to take evidence for the High Court and to take depositions following requests for evidence from overseas courts. At Garden Court she is on the Environmental & Climate Justice and Commercial & Business Ethics teams. She is a fellow of the Centre for International Sustainable Development Law based at McGill University, Quebec and Cambridge University and is the current leader of the European Circuit.



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Hugh Mercer KC

Judge, ECHR

Hugh Mercer KC is a Judge of the European Court of Human Rights, appointed to the bench in September 2025. Educated at Cambridge and the Université Libre de Bruxelles, Mercer was called to the Bar of England and Wales in 1985 and was appointed King's Counsel in 2008. His extensive judicial and international career includes serving as a UK Deputy High Court Judge since 2018, chairing the International Committee of the Bar of England and Wales, representing the UK at the CCBE, and holding multi-jurisdictional memberships across the Bars of Northern Ireland, Brabant Wallon, and Bruxelles. He is also a former leader of the European Circuit.



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Paul McGarry SC Bar of Ireland



Paul McGarry SC was Chair of the Bar of Ireland from July 2016 to July 2018.

He was President of Arbitration Ireland from 2022 to 2024. He was called to the Bar in 1996 and appointed a Senior Counsel in 2010. He has been a member of the Bar of England & Wales since 2012 and joined the Bar of Northern Ireland in 2019. He is also an associate at 6 Pump Court Chambers in London. His practice is primarily in public, commercial and European law. He is a former head of the Irish delegation to the Council of European Bars, a member of the Implementation Group of Ireland for Law, and Deputy Leader of the European Circuit. He is a Bencher of King's Inns and a Master of the Bench at Middle Temple.

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Ana Romero Porro

ASTROM Legal

A founding partner of ASTROM Legal, a firm specialising in Personal Injury and Insurance since January 2023, Ana has over 25 years of experience handling Spanish and cross-border tort claims, with recognised expertise in catastrophic injuries, brain and spinal trauma, clinical negligence, and product liability across multiple legal jurisdictions. Ana is the Immediate Past President of PEOPIL and a Governor of the American Association for Justice (AAJ). Her international litigation career includes key roles at firms like Irwin Mitchell and Cremades & Calvo-Sotelo. Frequently instructed as an expert in Spanish law for cross-border proceedings, she has prepared over 200 expert reports for courts in the UK, France, Germany, and the United States.



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Dr Sarah Egan Barrister New Square Chambers



Sarah is a Member of the Bars of England and Wales and of Ireland. She specialises in succession, estates, trusts, and Court of Protection work, as well as related professional negligence. Sarah has particular expertise in European cross-border succession and conflict of laws matters, including issues of domicile, the interpretation of foreign Wills, forced heirship, and the application of the EU Succession Regulation. Ranked as a Leading Junior in the Legal 500, Sarah has been commended for her "solid grasp of the law in her field". Prior to practising at the independent Bar, Sarah was in-house Counsel to a European commercial bank in the City of London, where her role involved advising on banking and financial services law and EU regulation.

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Christopher Deacon

Partner, Stewarts



Chris is one of the UK's leading international injury and travel lawyers.

He has been described as 'the leading lawyer of his generation in this area of law.'

He is recognised as 'a true force who leaves no stone unturned in his drive to succeed.' Chris studied European and French law at the University of Warwick and Lille II, France. He trained at Blake Lapthorn, qualifying into travel litigation before moving to Stewarts in 2013. Chris is a member of the Travel and Tourism Lawyers Association, APIL, PEOPIL and the AAJ. He chairs the PEOPIL EU-UK working group and is a member of the Law Society Private International Law Working Group.

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Ms. Justice Nuala Jackson

Ms. Justice Nuala Jackson is an Irish High Court Judge specialising in family, financial remedy, and child law cases. A Trinity College Dublin law graduate, she holds LL.M. degrees from Cambridge and Cardiff. She has lectured and presented extensively around family and child law. Before her judicial appointment, she practised as a Senior Counsel and lectured extensively. An accredited mediator, she formerly chaired the Family Lawyers Association of Ireland, helped initiate the Irish Family Law Arbitration Scheme, and served on the Irish CI Arb committee. She also chaired the Legal Aid Board and was Vice-Chair of the Personal Injuries Assessment Board. She is a Judicial Fellow of the International Academy of Family Law. She recently completed AI courses at LSE, UCD Professional Academy, and Oxford's Saïd Business School.



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Lance Duran

Provinziano & Associates

Lance Duran is a seasoned trial attorney with over two decades experience in civil and family law. Admitted to the California Bar in 2000, he began his career in Orange County handling complex litigation before launching his own practice. In 2012, he co-founded Erickson & Duran, expanding into insurance and estate planning while developing a focus on cross-border legal matters in Paris. He later served as a primary Senior Associate at Moshtael Family Law. He joined Provinziano & Associates in 2025. Based in Paris, he leverages his international perspective for complex family law cases, including cross-border custody and international divorce. Known for his assertive courtroom presence and strategic thinking, he guides clients through difficult challenges with empathy and clarity.



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Mayte Garcia

Mayte Garcia is the founder and managing partner of MAYTEGARCIA International Family Law, a Spanish boutique firm specialising in cross-border family law and child protection. With offices in Madrid and Málaga, she leads a five-lawyer team providing bespoke advice on complex international divorces, asset division, and custody disputes, specifically serving high-net-worth clients in Marbella and Sotogrande. A bilingual lawyer and mediator, Mayte is a renowned expert in international child abduction. She regularly collaborates with elite UK/EU law firms and foreign child protection authorities. Garcia is an IAFL and UIA Fellow, co-founder of the Spanish association on international child abduction, and a University of Málaga lecturer. She frequently speaks at global forums and widely publishes on international family law.



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Amy Scollan Hunters Law

Amy is a Partner at Hunters Law, specialising in complex, high-value financial remedy litigation and intricate company or trust structures.

Recognised as a Next Generation Partner in The Legal 500 and ranked in the Chambers High Net Worth Guide 2024, she is widely praised by peers and clients for her strategic problem-solving and thoroughness. Her broad family law expertise spans cross-border disputes, pre- and post-nuptial agreements, and serious child protection and safeguarding issues. As a key member of Hunters' International Safeguarding team, she handles sensitive cases involving mental capacity and welfare concerns. Additionally, Amy serves as a European Circuit committee member, regularly writing and speaking at international legal conferences.



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The Hon. Mr. Justice David Nolan Bar of Ireland



Mr. Justice David Nolan was appointed as a Judge of the High Court of Ireland in 2023. Educated at Gonzaga College and University College Dublin, he completed his legal training at the Honourable Society of King's Inns. He was called to the Bar in 1985 and appointed Senior Counsel in 2003. During his distinguished career, he established an extensive practice specialising in medical negligence, insurance law, and commercial litigation, earning a reputation as a highly skilled advocate in complex, high-profile cases. Mr Justice Nolan served as Chair of the Bar of Ireland from 2012 to 2014. He is a Bencher of King's Inns and is widely recognised as an international advocacy trainer, in Ireland and abroad.

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Antoine Parry

European Parliament

Antoine is a Member of the Legal Service of the European Parliament, where he advises on institutional, administrative and financial affairs and is regularly involved in high-profile litigation concerning MEPs, political parties and political groups. He previously spent five years at the Court of Justice of the European Union, serving as a legal assistant in the Cabinets of Advocate General Bobek and Advocate General Emiliou. He has published extensively on EU law, with a particular focus on UK-EU relations and the legal consequences of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union.



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Inés Barba Novoa

SBJ Abogados Asociados

Inés is a Málaga based abogada and a pioneering legal figure in Andalusia. In 2007, she co-founded the multilingual firm SBJ Abogados, specialising in complex criminal cases. She has led over 500 high-profile criminal cases across Spain, including drug trafficking, money laundering, and murder, representing clients before the Supreme and Constitutional Courts. Notably, in 2018, she became the first woman from Andalusia included in the Counsel List for the ICC. Her international expertise includes ICC seminar contributions, submissions to the Office of the Prosecutor regarding Colombia, and cross-border legal collaborations spanning France, the UK, Norway, and Algeria, frequently drawing international media attention.



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Francisco Verdún

Verdún Abogados

Francisco is a highly experienced Spanish lawyer with over 30 years of professional practice. A member of the Málaga Bar Association since 1987, he has a proven track record representing clients in complex civil and criminal matters before Spain's Supreme Court and regional high courts. Notably, he successfully argued *Karesvaara and Njie v. Spain* (2020) before the European Court of Human Rights. Following this victory, he secured a landmark Supreme Court decision granting a case review under Spain's updated Civil Procedure Act. He has also presented oral arguments before the European Parliament's Committee on Petitions. Additionally, Dr Verdún holds a Ph.D. in Law and regularly trains judges and legal practitioners in European law.



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Sonali Naik KC Joint Head of Garden Court Chambers

Sonali specialises in public law cases and in all aspects of immigration, asylum and nationality law and practice. She is ranked in immigration and public law in the Chambers & Partners and the Legal 500 Bar Guides. Sonali is a senior practitioner with over 30 years' experience. She was appointed King's Counsel in 2018 and conducts almost exclusively leading work at all levels: the European Court of Human Rights, the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, the Administrative Court and in the Upper Tribunal in statutory appeals and judicial reviews. She has very substantial immigration and asylum experience in her High Court and appellate court practice, acting in various country guidance asylum cases.



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David Conlan Smyth SC

Bar of Ireland

David Conlan Smyth was called to the Inner Bar in 2013. He specialises in public, EU, and constitutional law, focusing on immigration and asylum, alongside admiralty and fisheries law. As lead counsel before the CJEU, he has argued landmark cases including *Makran*, *Besthame, S.A. and R.J.*, and *Zambrano*. He frequently appears before the Irish Supreme Court and Court of Appeal, representing clients in major constitutional and reception conditions cases like *IHREC v. Minister for Children, Gorry*, and *Luximon*. Currently, David heads the Irish Delegation to the CCBE and formerly led the EUBA and the CCBE Migration Law Committee. He also lectures widely in Ireland and internationally.



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Benjamin Seifert Barrister, 1 Crown Office Row

Benjamin Seifert is an experienced public law barrister with an impressive record, including three Supreme Court appeals, recently representing the US government.

Before joining the Bar, he worked at the European Court of Human Rights. An Assistant Coroner for South London and Attorney General's A Panel member, Seifert specialises in coronial law, public inquiries, deaths in custody, unlawful detention, and national security. He also represents the Bar Council at the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE). Clients praise his expert knowledge, meticulous attention to detail, and pragmatic, polished advocacy. Legal directories highly commend his communication skills, describing him as a "charming, engaging" and "eloquent" advocate who delivers focused, well-structured submissions.



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Evanna Fruithof Director, Bar Council's Brussels Office

Evanna began her career as a London barrister in 1985 before moving to Brussels in 1990 to work for the European Commission's Merger Task Force. She later practiced competition law at Freshfields and served as Deputy Director of an EU political think-tank. In 1999, she established and became Consultant Director of the Bar Council's Brussels Office, representing the Bar ever since. She manages the Bar's European Committee, co-founded its Brexit working groups, and sits on the UK Domestic Advisory Group under the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement. Additionally, Evanna is a Middle Temple Benchers, a Temple Church Trust trustee, and Deputy Chair of the Institute of International and European Affairs in Brussels.



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Professor Oana Stefan

Professor of European Law

Prof. Oana Stefan is a Reader in Law and Associate Dean at KCL.

She previously taught European Union law at HEC Paris, the College of Europe, and University College Dublin. An expert in EU integration, she advised the Romanian Ministry of Justice and held numerous global visiting positions, including the 2022 Vincent Wright Chair at Sciences Po Paris. Her research focuses on EU energy, competition, and constitutional law. She is a leading expert on EU soft law and has published two major monographs. Her internationally significant research impact is widely recognised by UK funding bodies. She holds a PhD alongside prestigious degrees from Bucharest, the Sorbonne, and the College of Europe.



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