

# MEET ELRA'S LAND REGISTRY ASSOCIATIONS

## Interview with the Associação Sindical de Conservadores dos Registos

### ..... The organization

**When was your organization set up? How long have you been part of ELRA?**

The Portuguese Registrars Association was founded in 1990 and, although not responsible for the organization and management of the Registry Services in Portugal, represents the Registrars and is an active stakeholder as regards policies and measures related to Civil, Land and Mercantile Registries. The Association is an independent organization, supported exclusively by the quotations of its members, the Registrars.

The Association along with some other Member States organizations, gathered in 2004 in Lisbon, founded the European Land Registry Association, hence, being an ELRA member since its very beginning.

The commitment of the founding members, expressed by its representatives, Registrars, made possible, since the very beginning, the engagement of the European Commission. The European Commissioner for Justice, at the time, attended the constitutive Assembly, highlighting the role of Registries and the importance of the information they provide at national and European levels.

### ..... ELRA in early stages

**Could you share what ELRA was like in its early stages and what key changes have occurred since then?**

In the early stages, I would use the word "curiosity" to describe the common feeling of the participating Member States. Everyone was eager to know and understand the way the other systems were organized, their legal framework and inspiring principles. Although European judicial cooperation organizations have been in activity for long, until 2004, there had never been an European organization with the purpose of mutual knowledge and understanding of Registry Systems.

*"ELRA has always been a place to connect and share experiences"*



**LUISA CLODE**  
Former President  
& Contact Point



*"Since the very beginning, ELRA promoted the awareness of the role of Registries not only for the security in real estate transactions and financial mortgage markets, but also for judicial purposes"*

.....

The meetings, organized in the different Member States always with personal attendance, enabled and contributed to the blossoming of a sense of unity that endures and represents one of the association's outstanding strengths.

The **European freedoms in the field of immovable properties**, the growing movement or mobility of citizens, capital and services within European borders, boosted the interest and the need of **mutual knowledge in the field of registries**, that only a supranational and independent organization like ELRA was able to provide.

It is fair to say that, although finding many differences, mostly all national registry systems' purpose is **legal security**. The information provided needs to be **trustable**, so that parties, financial markets, courts and policy makers can efficiently take decisions.

Notwithstanding the consistent and sustained development of ELRA, as regards key changes I would like to highlight:

- The establishment of headquarters and **permanent representation in Brussels**, which allowed a significant proximity to European decision-making bodies;
- The setting up of the **European Land Registry Network**, with Contact Points from MSs, who need to be Registrars with a legal background;
- The steadily enlargement of **members**, also allowing **observer members** and the participation of **universities**;
- The unanimous approval of **Land Registry Principles**;
- The **IMOLA Project** that embodies the recognition of the importance of interconnecting Land Registry information, with legal meaning and effects, at European level.



XXXII General Assembly, Funchal, 2023  
Luisa Clode & Mihai Taus (current President)

## LUISA CLODE

ELRA President 2021 - 2023

*The first woman to assume the Presidency*



**You were the President of ELRA from 2021 to 2023. What aspects of your mandate would you highlight and what were the most surprising insights you gained that you did not expect to learn?**

Having started my collaboration with ELRA as contact point gave me a **perspective of the work developed since its beginning**:

Participating in the Board of Directors as Secretary General, also responsible for the ERLNetwork, enabled to have a new dimension of the Board tasks, the internal and financial management, under the supervision of an experienced President.



In this period, it is crucial to mention the unexceedable **adaptation** capacity of ELRA members, Board and the Secretariat to the new on-line reality arising from the pandemic. With no trips allowed, ELRA managed to keep going its studies and goals for the years, holding workshops and the general assembly online and still launching the **IMOLA Project III**! What an achievement!

**Being ELRA President...** was an honor and, indeed a privilege, having the whole frame in which the association is involved. Focused in the rule of law and in what is crucial for EU freedoms in the field of Registries, along with diplomacy when dealing with so many different stakeholders, was the way of leading.

“

*“Keeping updated with EU objectives and proposals, is a challenge that enriches whoever is interested in strengthening cohesion within the Union”*

The arising study of the role of registries in face of the need for the freezing and confiscation of assets (including immovable assets) belonging to oligarchs due to the territorial invasion of Ukraine, was unexpected and brought to ELRA members a new perspective of their activity in the field of EU security.

Having Hungary as full member and Turkey and Ukraine as observer members in ELRA, aligned with the openness that guides its principles, was a relevant step forward.

U  
K  
R  
A  
I  
N  
E



*Luisa Clode welcomed the State Services for Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre (Ukraine) as observer member*

**Because there are no Registries without Registrars,** it was decisive to all members to have reached an unanimous agreement on the Land Registrar's Statute, based on legal expertise, independence, qualified professionals, responsibility and sovereignty on decision making, foreseeing a **future with new technologies and artificial intelligence** to which Land Registrars should adapt without subordination.

## IMOLA Project

The statute made clear that Land Registrars should contribute to a more harmonized, transparent and secure interoperability of LR information between MSs, making it more accessible to all law professionals and promoting legal certainty, thus, paving the way to IMOLA project.

In March 2023 ELRA closed IMOLA III Project, delivering a sophisticated **electronic tool with a harmonized structure for LR information** approved by all members, along with qualified legal concepts and formants provided by experts in several languages.



In addition, ELRA participated in the **EU ADAPT** project, for the purpose of adaptation of property rights in the framework of the **European Succession Regulation**.

*“In what concerns “surprising insights” I would underline the awareness of how resilient and hard working is the construction of the Union. Speaking with a single voice, in representation of 27 MSs, is tremendously demanding, taking place sustainably and step by step by those who truly believe in a space of freedom, peace and rule of law, in the most diverse fields on which the European union is built, namely the Registries - Luisa Clode, ELRA Former President”*

H  
U  
N  
G  
A  
R  
Y



*General Department of Registry and Cartography as full member*

## ••••• Achievements

### What benefits do you think ELRA membership brings to European citizens?

ELRA membership is an added value not only for Registrars that can **exchange ideas** and **best practices**, but for all **legal professionals** that can more **easily understand and use cross border legal information**.

Registrars, lawyers, solicitors and judges, when dealing with information on property rights are also dealing with citizens' lives and protecting their interests; hence, indirectly all the work develop by ELRA, at the end of the day, is designed to meet citizens' rights and interests.

In a space of freedom like the EU, where increasingly citizens work and live in a country different than the one where they were raised, building structures to support and protect their rights abroad, is a real contribution to the European Project.



**The representatives of Associação Sindical Dos Conservadores Dos Registos in ELRA**

*“The broader the range of countries that take part of ELRA, the better its aims will be fulfilled, and therefore also the service for professionals and citizens in general”*

### What do you think that mostly contributes to ELRA achievements?

**1** The consistency of the organization, with regular **meetings and coherent topics aligned with the EU policies**, connected, directly or indirectly, to Land Registries whether at **national and at European level**, topics that are reviewed and regularly updated.

**2** The **representativeness of the registration systems** of the various MSs, together with the democratic way in which ELRA decisions are taken.

**3** The work developed for free by Contact Points, summarized and organized in **Fact Sheets** by coordinators, supported by an efficient Secretariat.

**4** The openness that inspires and guides **ELRA activities**, which is reflected in the participation in many different forums, recognizing the wide-ranging presence of registers in the most assorted areas of citizens' and companies' lives. Openness that also takes ELRA to be part of **international organizations** as diverse as the European Judicial Network, the European Law Institute, the International Properties Registries Association (IPRA – CINDER) or the IBEROREG, among others.

**5** The **vision of future** mainly when dealing with contemporary issues, for example the ones related to the **digitalization** of the information and the (re)use of data along with its protection, or the role of registries in face of **climate change**.

**How would you explain what ELRA is to a general audience? How does your work within your association align with ELRA's objectives?**

Addressing to non-professionals I would first explain the importance of the registries as means of protection of property right in face of third parties, judges and political powers.

Property registration assures that no one can be deprived of what is theirs, unless under the law and upon fair compensation.



## The mission of ELRA

"ELRA main purpose is to make **understandable cross borders, the organization, effects and legal value of the information on immovable rights in each member state**. Thus, anyone buying, inheriting or possessing immovable assets abroad, can be certain of the content of his or her rights, how to prove and protect them.

ELRA, as a **supranational organization, representing the registries of MSs**, is the entity enabled to provide tools to display such information, and in coordination with the **European Commission** and national authorities, build a real interconnection of Registries."

## Associação Sindical de Conservadores dos Registos

"Within the work in the Portuguese Registrars Association, we are involved in the **legislative process regarding any changes on Registries in Portugal**.

The examples coming from other MSs through ELRA have been tremendously useful as arguments to help decision makers. Good, or not so good, experiences in other countries have been often used to explain policy makers the reason to adopt, or not to adopt, certain measures, and I am very thankful for ELRA to have provided such knowledge."







## INTERVIEW PROJECT: MEET ELRA'S LAND REGISTRY ASSOCIATIONS



Av. de Cortenbergh, 66  
1000 Brussels (Belgium)

[secretariat@elra.eu](mailto:secretariat@elra.eu)



DISCLAIMER The content of this pages represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility. The European Commission does not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains