



**Notary as a safeguard of the
Legality of Civil Transactions**

Dear colleagues,

In 2024, the Lithuanian notariat was granted the opportunity to represent the Council of Notaries of the European Union (CNUE), a distinguished organization comprising 50,000 notaries across Europe. Leading this institution is not only a privilege but also a profound responsibility. The President of the CNUE is entrusted with representing all 22 member states while respecting and preserving the unique national characteristics and traditions of each notarial system. During my one-year tenure as President of the European Notariat, I have been deeply reaffirmed that, despite the differences in the notarial practices across the 22 CNUE member states, we, as notaries, are united by shared core principles. A notary is a public official entrusted by the State with the critical role of ensuring the legality of civil transactions.

The public nature of notarial duties sets notaries apart from other legal professionals. Unlike other practitioners in the legal field, notaries do not solely protect the interests of the parties involved in a transaction, they also serve as guardians of the public interest. Notarial documents provide the foundation upon which individual rights, transactions, and legal facts are recorded in state registers. It is the notary's responsibility to verify and certify these documents, thereby guaranteeing the accuracy, completeness, and reliability of the data within public registers. Such a level of reliability would be unattainable if the registration process in public registers were conducted without preventive control.

The role of preventive control performed by notaries is especially critical in the context of digitalisation. The rapidly evolving technological landscape necessitates the digital transformation of certain services. Consequently, European notaries are actively transitioning many of their functions into the digital sphere. In several countries, specific notarial acts can now be performed not only at the notary's office but also remotely. Nevertheless, we remain steadfast in our commitment to maintaining the highest standards of quality and legal security. As digital technologies and processes continue to evolve at an unprecedented pace, it is imperative to preserve and reinforce the role of the notary as a guarantor of legal certainty.

Lithuania assumed the presidency of the CNUE from the German notariat, which led the organization in 2023 and took significant steps to uphold the preventive control functions of notaries in areas such as company law and the protection of vulnerable individuals. Following the example of my predecessor, German notary *Dr. Peter Stelmaszczyk*, who guided the CNUE in 2023, I have dedicated my presidency in 2024 to rallying support from the European notarial community for the Ukrainian notariat. Despite operating under the dire conditions of war, the Ukrainian notariat continues to play a critical role in upholding the rule of law. In September last year, representatives from CNUE member notariats and European institutions convened in Vilnius to discuss ways to support the Ukrainian notariat in its vital mission.

Their resilience underscores the commitment of notaries across Europe, particularly within jurisdictions following the Latin notarial system, to demonstrate through their daily work that they are trusted partners of the State, ensuring legal certainty in a ever-changing world.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M. Stračkaitis', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Marius Stračkaitis, Honorary President of CNUE, President of Lithuanian Chamber of Notaries