

Petra Mahnič is a member of the EU Council Legal Service (CLS) since 2004, where she acquired legal expertise in wide-ranging areas of EU law and policies, building on her undergraduate studies in law in Ljubljana and Amsterdam, post-graduate studies in EU law at the College of Europe in Bruges (LLM) and tenure as legal adviser in the Constitutional Court of Slovenia.

In the General Secretariat of the EU Council she has obtained deep and extensive knowledge of the EU's institutional structure and functioning, and the EU decision-making processes in particular. She has been providing legal advice to the European Council and the Council, including various EU Council preparatory bodies and committees, and has been acting as Council agent defending the legality of EU Council acts before EU Courts.

She is currently coordinator for Common Foreign and Security Policy and public international law within the External Relations Directorate of the CLS, responsible for the Foreign Relations Counsellors Council working party (RELEX), the European Peace Facility Committee (EPFC) and the Public International Law Working Party (COJUR).

Since October 2015, while in the CLS Directorate on external relations, she has gathered considerable experience concerning EU restrictive measures and other CFSP activities, providing legal advice to the Council, assisting in the management of restrictive measures regimes, coordinating litigation in EU restrictive measures as well as defending their legality before EU Courts. She is also an accredited trainer and provides tailor-made trainings on the role of the EU Council Presidency in the EU's external relations and on the legal framework of EU External Relations, to hundreds of Member State officials in the context of Presidency preparation activities.

In 2021 she was seconded to the Permanent Representation of Slovenia to the EU during the Slovenian presidency of the EU Council, providing legal and policy advice to the Council Presidency-in-office as well as being chair of the Working Party on maritime issues.

Since 2022 she has been a Lead Instructor within the Executive Program of the School of Transnational Governance of the European University Institute (Florence) on the course *Making Sanctions Work: Political, Legal, and Economic Challenges of EU Restrictive Measures* and a contributor to the *Capacity-building Programme for Western Balkan diplomats*. She is also visiting professor at the legal department of the College of Europe in Bruges.

She is the author of a number of publications on EU external relations law, the latest one the book chapter 'Constructive Abstention in EU Foreign and Security Policy' in *The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy as a Legal Actor* (Ed by Hoffmeister, Havas), Brill Nijhoff, 2025.