

# South East European **Law** School

## NEWSLETTER

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**'WE BELIEVE THAT SEELS WILL BETTER CONNECT THE LEGAL COMMUNITY OF THE REGION TO DISTINGUISHED UNIVERSITIES AND SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTES IN EUROPE AND BEYOND'.**

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Dear reader,

We are glad to present you the first edition of the South East European Law School Network (SEELS) quarterly Newsletter which will be, we believe, an informative and useful read. It is our idea to regularly produce these informative bulletins to reach the broadest audience possible, primarily in the SEELS network but also wider and to keep you informed about our goals, activities, plans, successes and experiences.

SEELS, as a network, is dedicated to creating synergies and fostering excellence in science and education through regional collaboration. It is comprised of the 13 law faculties from the University of Tirana, University of Sarajevo, University of Zenica, University "Džemal Bijedić" of Mostar, University Zagreb, University of Split, Jossip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, University of Rijeka, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, University of Montenegro, University of Belgrade, University of Kragujevac and University of Niš. As a network representing approximately 1,150 teachers and researchers as well as 41,000 students, it works on the development and introduction of new joint programmes and activities in the area of education, further professional training, and on research and publishing in the field of law. In this manner the SEELS members are able to offer attractive and specialised courses and programmes and thereby facilitate regional mobility of scientists, students, researchers and lawyers.

Our permanent goal and strong belief is that the knowledge should be multiplied and communicated. We are convinced that only through informing and involving the widest of academic audience possible we can truly reach our goals and develop. On that note we would like to leave you with the content of this first SEELS quarterly Newsletter in hope that it will provoke interest for further knowledge in all things SEELS.

## SEE EU CLUSTER OF EXCELLENCE IN EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL LAW



### CLUSTER OF EXCELLENCE IN EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

The SEE | EU Cluster of Excellence is a 4 year project which is jointly implemented by SEELS Network and Europa-Institut of Saarland University in Germany and has been officially launched last year. The project includes various activities which will be conducted in the upcoming period and is financially supported by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). 2015 was a significant year for the project as it has proven to be a rather dynamic structure which motivated and involved the network. The official start of the project was marked with the kick off conference in Saarbrücken in November 2015. What followed were the activities that were marked with increased mobility among the project partners.

#### **Curricula Workshop**

While preparing the project application, our findings demonstrated that the different approaches in teaching the EU and International law in the region create some problems and make the standardization of the curricula essential for further collaboration and progress. In that sense the series of activities will be undertaken in the upcoming period with a common aim of creating joint curricula for EU and International law. The first step was a mapping of the overall situation within the network, identifying the status quo and reviewing the capacities and the needs of the all involved parties. Thus the first in the series of curricula workshop was held during of the SEELS Management Board meeting, December 2015. The participation of all members of the network and Europa-Institut, helped to better grasp the overall situation within the network when the EU and International Law curricula is concerned. It became evident that there is diversity between the project partners which certainly can be addressed. As another result from the workshop, the clear mapping of the capacities and the needs of the partners/network were made and preliminary strategies were discussed.

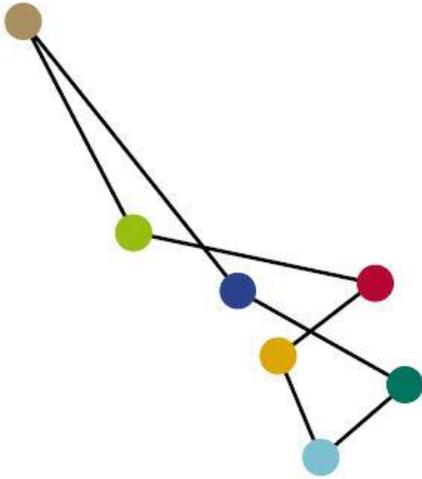
#### **E-Learning Workshop**

E-Learning modules are to be developed jointly within the project in the upcoming period enabling thus all of the participants in the project to teach and learn independent of time and place. The workshops will be focused on EU and International law and made available for all project partners and interested parties. In mid-December 2015 the first workshop on E-Learning was held in Saarbrücken, engaging major part of the project partner representatives to discuss the potentials of such modules for teaching and learning. This particular workshop had as a goal to introduce the subject matter of E-Learning and to inform the panel on the modules of using the authoring as well as to introduce them to the content-management software and data bases which would plant the bases for the upcoming strategic meeting for E-Learning.

#### **Study trip to Belgrade – academic visit from Europa-Institut**

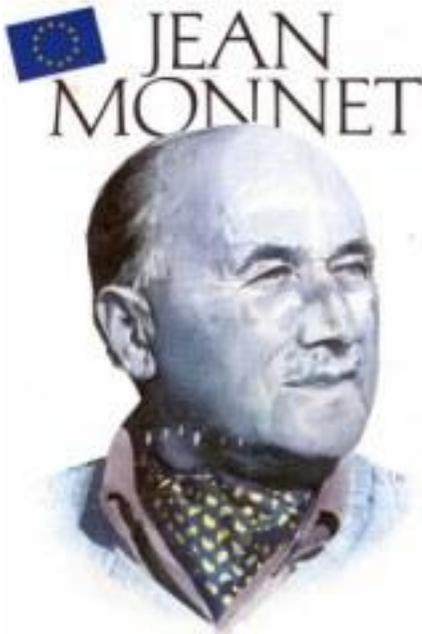
A series of study visits are planned to be implemented within the SEE EU Cluster of Excellence in EU and International Law project. One of the activities provides for research stays of the students and professors of the SEELS network in Europa-Institut while the other enables groups of scholars from the Europa-Institut to visit the SEE region and attend series of special tailor made lectures that introduce them in depth with the SEE region, bringing in such manner the two regions closer together, and making their collaboration more efficient and successful. The first visit of such kind happened at the end of the year 2015 when a group of young scholars from Europa-Institut paid a visit to Faculty of Law in Belgrade. This was a first in a series of such visits that are planned for the upcoming period, and had proven to be a real success as was stressed by the guests and the hosts alike.

## Research Stays of SEELS representatives in Europa-Institut

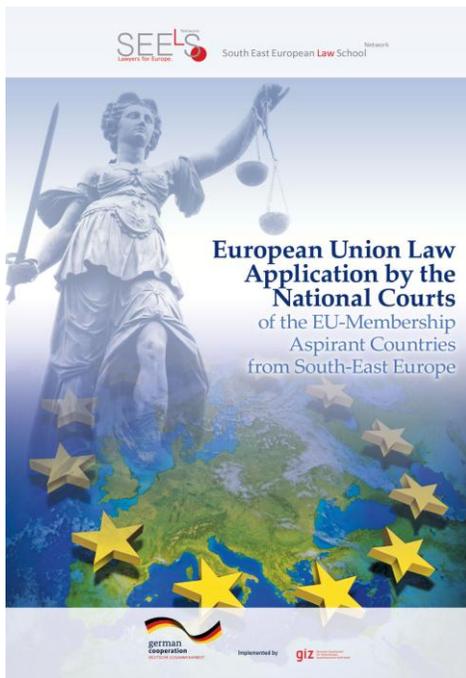


The research stays for Ph.D. students and professors from the SEELS network are one of the components of the project that were first put in motion and proven to be among the most popular ones. These activities offer a month research stays for Ph.D. students and 2 weeks stays for the professors at the Europa-Institut which offers its vast library and data base accesses to our members in the upcoming period. The activity had an aim not only to enable the academics to conduct research at the partner universities, but also to contribute to the exchange of high profile, experienced lecturers between the respective partner institutions. If we judge from the initial interest it has proven to be a real success, and the expectations were fully met. In the past period professors from the Faculty of Law in Albania, and Ph.D. candidates from faculties of law in Skopje, Zenica and Zagreb had completed their stays. In the upcoming period we expect lecturers and Ph.D. students to visit Europa Institut, in accordance with afore defined schedule.

## ‘STRENGTHENING EU LEGAL STUDIES IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE’



The beginning of 2016 was also marked by the preparation of the proposal ‘Strengthening EU Legal Studies in South East Europe’ under the Jean Monnet actions of the European Commission. The development of the application documents involving all member faculties of SEELS was a great learning experience in EU funding and cross-regional academic cooperation in a dynamic multi stakeholder environment. Generally, the project aims to advance and promote the exchange of knowledge and views on the development of the legal systems in South Eastern Europe in accordance with EU law. The proposed activities which are planned to be realized with a tentative budget of EUR 68.000 will reinforce the structures for the development and promotion of the SEE Law Journal which is a biannually published scientific magazine of SEELS. In the framework of the proposal it is foreseen to organise a series of ‘EU Law Days’ at all 13 member faculties with the involvement of EU representatives, legal practitioners and civil society actors. For the time being, the SEE Law Journal is the only scientific English language journal in the region which is dedicated to EU legal affairs. It publishes high-quality, double peer-reviewed scientific papers that have a multidisciplinary approach and are focusing on relevant questions of regional, European and international integration of the Western Balkan states, issues of legal reform and approximation with the *acquis communautaire*, best practices in legal reform and the approximation of the national legislations in SEE with EU law. The outcome of the selection process is expected to be announced in July 2016.



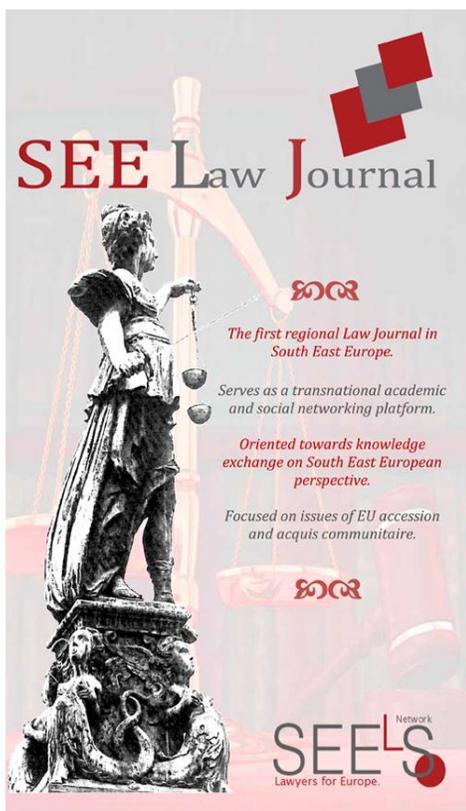
## **‘ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL SYSTEM FOR REGIONAL MONITORING OF THE SEE COURTS’ CAPACITY FOR EU LAW APPLICATION’**

In mid-January 2015 SEELS submitted the proposal entitled “Establishment of a Regional System for Regional Monitoring of the SEE Courts’ Capacity for EU Law Application” to Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The proposal was developed by the Centre’s staff under the academic supervision of Prof. Dr. Sašo Georgievski (Iustinianus Primus Faculty of Law, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje). With a tentative budget of EUR 225.600 the project proposes the establishment of a regional system for regular monitoring of the SEE courts’ capacity for European law and international law application, applicable both pre- and post- EU accession, and for the enhancement of the SEE judges’ education regarding European law application currently offered at the national judicial training institutions. It builds upon a previous project on ‘European Union Law Application by the National Courts of the EU Membership Aspirant Countries from Southeast Europe’ of 2013, supported by GIZ and performed by faculties of law from six SEE countries – members of the SEELS network. The concept note is currently being evaluated by the donor organization.

**DAAD**  
Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst  
German Academic Exchange Service

## **GRADUATES4ACADEMIA – SUMMER SCHOOL ON MIGRATION LAW**

The SEELS network and Europa-Institut have a well-established collaboration. This can be now additionally seen in the production of this 4 in a row project application focusing on summer colloquium for Ph.D. students, which was prepared upon the completion of the “EU Opens Markets” summer school project. The application was submitted to the German Academic Exchange Service - DAAD in the second half of 2015 and in January 2016 we were officially informed that the project has been awarded for implementation. However, we were also informed that the approved budget is almost half of what was envisaged in the original project proposal. The new budget asked for restructuring of the project activities and their adaptation to the newly created conditions, and for this purpose representatives of Europa-Institut visited the Centre for SEELS in early March for further coordination. Following the meeting a new structure of the project was created that to the extent possible preserved the signature activities in the project. Thus the planned summer colloquium for Ph.D. students and workshops for the master students were fused into one. In September 2016 a summer school will be organized focusing on the Migration Law, with the participation of master students and lecturers from SEELS network and Europa-Institut. In the programme of the summer school both theoretical and practical aspects will be included, and aside from the lectures the participants will have a chance through direct meetings with the NGO and international organization representatives that work on the migration in the region to exchange information and obtain further knowledge on the issues relevant to the summer school. The summer school will be held in Ohrid, Macedonia from 09 till 17 of September.



## **SEE LAW JOURNAL – THIRD EDITION AND APPOINTMENT OF NEW EDITORIAL BOARD**

The South East European Law Journal (SEE Law Journal) is a scientific English language journal of SEELS. The SEE Law Journal publishes high-quality original, double peer-reviewed scientific, review and professional articles focusing on relevant questions of regional, European and international integration of SEE countries, issues of legal reform and approximation with the *acquis communautaire*, best practices in legal reform and unification of the legislation in the region of South East Europe and the EU.

By now two publications of SEE Law Journal were produced by SEELS with the financial support of Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Open Regional Fund for South East Europe – Legal GIZ Legal Reform office in Skopje. These editions were both published in paper and in e-format, and are available for free download on the SEELS website [www.seelawschool.org](http://www.seelawschool.org). In the past period the Centre for SEELS and the Editorial Board of the SEE Law Journal have explored the ways to improve its format, editorial policy and speed up the somewhat lengthy procedure of its production. Thus a decision of publishing the journal solely in e-format was made, and a new editorial board was elected. In addition the new call for papers was published on 15 of March 2016, announcing the production of the third SEE Law Journal.



## **EMPLOYMENT OF PROGRAM ASSISTANT**

With the awarding of 2 new projects, increased fund raising work, preparation of the several substantively complex applications, preparation, coordination and issuing of the next edition of SEE Law Journal and regular coordinative and administrative work in the Centre for SEELS, it became more than evident that there is a place for engagement of new employee. Therefore, the Management Board on its 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting in December 2015 decided that the Centre for SEELS may employ a Program Assistant, which will act as a support of the Centre's team, so to successfully comply with the increased scope of work which is expected in 2016. The position of the Program Assistant is to help with the overall administrative work of the Centre, coordinate the publication of SEE Law journal, communicate and coordinate with offices who are also collaborating with the Centre on the administrative or organizational issues, and offer support and assistance in writing of project proposals and applications, as well in the implementation of the existing projects.

The Centre announced the job opening with a public Call for Applications in January 2016. Due to the large number of applications received by the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2016, all the candidates received an additional assessment task on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 2016 with a deadline until the 5<sup>th</sup> of February 2016. All of the candidates that completed the task successfully were invited on an

interview, held on the 17<sup>th</sup> of February 2016. After the overall selection process was completed Mr. Konstantin Bitrakov was selected to be the new Program Assistant. He undertook the new position from the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2016.

## **VISITS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SEELS NETWORK TO THE CENTRE FOR SEELS**

Centre for SEELS has welcomed two representatives from the SEELS network late in 2015 (November and December). The newly appointed Vice dean of Faculty of Law in Zagreb, Prof. Dr. Davor Derencinović and newly appointed member of the Management Board of SEELS from the Faculty of Law, University of Montenegro Prof. Dr. Ivana Jelić. The meetings were informative and productive, with participation of the whole Centre for SEELS team. They were a good opportunity to inform on the current and planned activities within the network, to discuss the strategies for development and to exchange valuable experiences. The Centre remains open for such visits in future as they have proven to be very fruitful experiences.

## **LEGAL PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN SEE PROJECT**



Together with the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute in Vienna, SEELS is one of the key partners in the regional research project “Legal Protection against discrimination in South East Europe”, funded by the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development and implemented by GIZ’s Open Regional Fund – Legal Reform.

Officially launched with the kick-off meeting held in Skopje on the 21<sup>st</sup> of October 2015, this project has an objective to improve the methodological capacities of the relevant stakeholders to act against discrimination in SEE region. As an output of the project two main results are expected. Firstly, the state authorities dealing with anti-discrimination should be enabled to improve the enforcement of the protection against discrimination in their institutions, and secondly, the educational institutions and law faculties should improve the quality of education on anti-discrimination anchored in legal training.

Three core activities have been planned as an integral part of this project: conduction of national researches by team of experts; preparation of a regional comparative study; and production, publication and dissemination of a policy brief. The team of experts has already been formed, and is currently working on the national research based on methodology that has been jointly developed at the meeting held on the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 2015, in Belgrade.

From the SEELS members the following experts have been appointed:

- Prof. Dr. Flutura Kola-Tafaj, Faculty of Law, University of Tirana,
- Prof. Dr. Maja Čolaković, Faculty of Law, “Džemal Bijedić” University of Mostar,
- Prof. Dr. Zlatan Meškić, Faculty of Law, University of Zenica,
- Asst. Prof. Dr. Midhat Izmirlija, Faculty of Law, University of Sarajevo,
- Prof. Dr. Mario Vinković, Faculty of Law, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek,
- Prof. Dr. Nada Bodiroga-Vukobrat, Faculty of Law, University of Rijeka,
- Asst. Prof. Dr. Antonija Petričušić, Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb,
- Asst. Prof. Dr. Elena Mihajlova, Iustinianus Primus Faculty of Law, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje,

- Prof. Dr. Ivana Jelić, Faculty of Law, University of Montenegro,
- Asst. Prof. Dr. Ivana Krstić Davinić, Faculty of Law, University of Belgrade

The project is planned to be completed in August 2016.



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