



President's Newsletter

Dear ELFA Members,
Dear Colleagues,

As you know I was elected the President of the ELFA Board at the last AGM meeting in Ljubljana (25–27th of February 2010). With the present newsletter I would like to brief you on our recent past activities and the plans for the future.

First and foremost, let me express our common thanks to the outgoing President Janez Kranjc (University of Ljubljana) for having organized the last meeting in such a splendid manner. We happily experienced outstanding and generous hospitality of the Mayor of the City of Ljubljana, the Rector of the University, the Dean of the Faculty of Law as well as all the staff. In the first time of the history of ELFA we had honour to welcome the President of the hosting-country – His Excellency the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Prof. Dr. Danilo Turk at the General Assembly.

The topic of the conference, *Teaching Law in the 21st century*, brought together presentations and debates chiefly dedicated to the impact of the Bologna reform on teaching of law a decade after Bologna Declaration. Much time was devoted to the problem of growing students' numbers – which could be summed-up by the heading '*law faculty vs. law factory*'. The conclusions of these discussions were gathered in two resolutions adopted by the General Assembly.

The Assembly elected a new Board of ELFA for the period 2010–2011. It is composed by members representing law faculties from six European countries : Jacek Petzel (University of Warsaw – President), Manuel Bermejo Castrillo (University Carlos III Madrid – First Vice-President), Hans van Houtte (Catholic University of Leuven – Treasurer), Anne Klebes-Pelissier (University of Strasbourg – Vice-President) , Reiner Schulze (University of Munster – Vice-President) and Haluk Kabaalioglu (Yeditepe University – Vice President). Ms Helena Ferro de Gouveia is the ELFA secretary.

Since the last annual conference the Board has met twice. Both meetings were organized in Germany (in Berlin, 23rd–24th of April, and in Bonn, 30th of June – 1st of July). Let me briefly outline the main items of their agenda.

1. Membership.

Given that there is about five hundred law faculties in Europe and only hundred–eighty of them are members of ELFA we resolved to broaden and popularize membership of Organization. Over two hundred fifty letters in various languages (including Russian) have been sent to invite new members to join us. It is still too early to estimate the results of this recruitment action (up today we have received six new declarations). The Board has decided to repeat it at time the information of the next General Assembly is sent. We have also decided to propagate the ELSA activities among the non–members.

2. The Web-site.

The web-page has been evaluated. We have noticed with great satisfaction a great progress since Ms. Helena Ferro de Gouveia took up its maintenance. The web-page still has to be regularly updated.

3. The Newsletter.

The Board has called for the reorganization of the *Newsletter*. It shall consist of three parts: notices from the Board including Presidential letters, news from the members (e.g. on conferences and other activities, work proposals), facts about the next AGM .

4. ECTS Experts.

There are still law faculties in Europe that have not adopted ECTS system yet. As Bologna system is going to be implemented in the Russian Federation and Ukraine, the Board has resolved to create a list of ECTS experts to aid the law faculties with this issue. In order to do so we are calling experts willing to perform this task to put forward their candidatures. The final list shall be created in October.

5. RG (Research Group).

Since our participation in *Tuning Project I* ended and the Association decided not to directly involve *Tuning II*, ELFA has not been active in the field of research. In the opinion of the Board this should be amended – notwithstanding unsatisfactory experience in the past. Therefore the research group (RG) should be created. This group should work on the problems of ‘minimal standards’. The decision to establish such a group was taken during the first Board meeting in Berlin and Janez Kranjc was asked to chair this team. The meeting in Florence shall be devoted, *in. al.*, to discuss personal and financial matters which the RG creation involves.

6. Financial Situation.

In 2009 ELFA had to reimburse to the European Commission the sum of several thousands Euro (roughly forty-five thousand) received within the framework of the Grant Agreement 1999-1023 (Thematic Network Project). This presented quite a burden to our finances. At the moment the financial situation is more stable and allows us to provide for the necessary expenses, connected mostly to functioning of the secretary unit .

7. EJLE (*European Journal of Legal Education*).

After Routledge, which had been the publisher of printed edition of *ELJE*, had decided to terminate the publication of the *Journal*, the former Board of ELFA decided in 2009 to keep it in an electronic version. It is worth noticing that ELFA used to *ca.* 8,000 € for printed version. In the opinion of the present Board, we should carry on publishing *ELJE* only in an electronic form, at least until the financial situation allows us to discuss problem once more. The *ELJE* condition will be discussed in more detail during the Florence meeting (peer-review, editor, *etc.*)

7. Conference in Warsaw.

The next AGM Conference shall take place in Warsaw, 24th–26th of February. The topic of the conference has not been definitely set yet, but the idea is not to discuss – as it has usually happened – the problems connected with Bologna process. Instead, we would like to consider the real problems arising from law faculties functioning, our independence (or rather dependence), as well as social and financial status and perspectives of higher education in Europe. We have also decided that instead of organising the usual workshops on teaching matters, we will devote our time to scientific presentations in four thematic sections: commercial law, civil law, public law, criminal law.

Jacek Petzel
President of the ELFA Board