

EDITOR'S NOTE

The scholarly community has long been intrigued by the diverse and illusive nature of soft norms and their effects on national legislation, compliance and enforcement. The Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Faculty of Law (Budapest) hosted a workshop on EU soft law, in an attempt to launch discussions surrounding the use of soft law in different policy fields and to compare theoretical frameworks and empirical findings. As a result, authors presented their research regarding the use of soft law in the fields of integration policy, environmental policy, agricultural policy, collective redress and the policing of demonstrations. Findings of the sectoral inquiries show, that soft law is used in different policy fields to varying degrees, and most policy fields have their soft law measure „of choice”. Strategies underlying the use of these norms also differ, ranging from overcoming a lack of political will for regulation, through deficient competences to attempts to circumvent legislators. Finally, the legal bases enshrined in the founding treaties to enact rules may specifically refer to certain soft regulatory forms or will simply employ the sweeping term ‘appropriate measures’, allowing for the adoption of a wide array of soft instruments. The thematic chapter of this volume includes the final papers proceeding from the workshop held on 22 May 2018.

An important piece in the part on the development of international law describes the international legal personality of the International Criminal Court, authored by the ICC’s Hungarian judge, the Head of the Yearbook’s Board of Editors, Péter Kovács. This part further includes discussions on highly topical issues, such as on the Belt and Road initiative (Marcell Horváth) and corporate social responsibility in international law (Lénárd Sándor).

Articles on the development of European Union law include the proceedings of the conference organized by the Budapest Section of the Fédération Internationale pour le Droit Européen (FIDE) celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Rome Treaties. Topics covered by the authors include processes of differentiation and disintegration (H.E. János Martonyi), the development of competition law (Tihamér Tóth), public procurement (Ágota Török and Anita Németh), environmental policy (Gyula Bándi) and the preliminary ruling procedure (Réka Somssich).

Hungarian state practice in the year 2018 is introduced by Barnabás Hajas in his article on the new Act on Administrative Procedure and Marcel Szabó’s contribution on the importance of Natura 2000 for the protection of biodiversity.

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Finally, don't forget to check out the book reviews to see what Hungarian scholarly literature had to offer this year!

As ever, we wish you a good read and hope to welcome you among the readers of the next volume of the Hungarian Yearbook of International Law and European Law.

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