

# ANNUAL REPORT 2018

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Maastricht Centre  
for European Law



Maastricht University



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# Management Team



Bruno de Witte  
MCEL co-director



Ellen Vos  
MCEL co-director



Maja Brkan  
MCEL associate director



Matteo Bonelli  
MCEL co-coordinator  
(January-August)



Paul Dermine  
MCEL co-coordinator

## New Members



**Elin Börjedal** joined Maastricht University in September 2017 as Lecturer in European Fundamental Rights and European Law. Currently, she is conducting her PhD research in the field of European Fundamental Rights. Elin studied law at Maastricht University, Copenhagen University, and KU Leuven.



**John Cotter** is Lecturer and Researcher at the Department of International and European Law. John's research interests lie in the area of European institutional law, with a particular focus on the Article 267 TFEU Preliminary Reference Procedure. John completed his studies at University College Cork, Universität Konstanz, King's Inns, and received his PhD from Trinity College Dublin.

Before joining Maastricht University in September 2017, John worked as a Research Assistant at the Office of the Attorney General on the Statute Law Revision Project, practised at the Irish bar, and lectured at Dublin City University and at the University of Wolverhampton.



**Lucía Martínez Lorenzo** is PhD candidate at Maastricht University and the University of Hasselt. Her research focuses on Public Procurement Law and, more specifically, on the implementation of Directive 24/2014/EC on public procurement. Before starting her PhD, Lucía studied at Universidad de Deusto, Universidad Antonio de Nebrija, and Maastricht University, where she obtained her LL.M. at the European Law School, specialising in Public Law and Governance.



**Franco Peirone** joined Maastricht University and MCEL in November 2018. He is Lecturer in European and Constitutional Law at the Department of Public Law.

He pursued his legal education at University of Torino (where he also obtained his PhD), Maastricht University, and NYU. Prior to his appointment at Maastricht University, he was a visiting scholar at George Washington University, post-doctoral scholar at Università del Piemonte Orientale, and Emile Noël Fellow at the Jean Monnet Center for International and Regional Economic Law & Justice at NYU.

## Visiting Researchers

**Nicola Bergamaschi** is Lecturer and Researcher at the University of Bologna, where he also obtained his law degree. During his stay in Maastricht, between October and December 2018, he conducted research on EU External Relations Law under the supervision of Prof. Andrea Ott.



**Ioannis Gerasimos** is an attorney in Athens and is conducting his PhD research at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. The core of his research concerns national and European constitutional identities. Ioannis studied law at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and the University of Edinburgh. Ioannis conducted a visiting research period in Maastricht under the supervision of Prof. Monica Claes.



**Beatrice La Porta** is a lawyer specialised in food law. She studied law at the University of Palermo and LUMSA University in Rome. Beatrice is currently pursuing her PhD at the Agri-System Doctoral School of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Piacenza. Her PhD research focuses on the legal framework regulating novel food. Beatrice carried out a visiting research period in Maastricht between May and June 2018 under the supervision of Prof. Ellen Vos.

# Trainees

Academic year 2017-2018

In the academic year 2017-2018, MCEL was supported by three trainees:



**Diya Dilan** was completing the final year of the LL.B European Law School. Since then, Diya has graduated from her LL.B. (cum laude) and is currently pursuing an LL.M. in Financial Law at Leiden University.



**Maia Ignatenko** was completing her LL.M. in European Law, specialising in Market Integration. Maia has now graduated from her LL.M. (cum laude) and has started a Blue Book Traineeship at the European Commission (DG JUST).



**Ilaria Piovesan** was completing the final year of the LL.B European Law School. Since then, Ilaria has graduated from her LL.B. (cum laude) and is currently pursuing a MA in European Public Affairs at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Maastricht University, while continuing her traineeship at MCEL.

In the academic year 2018-2019, MCEL is being supported by three trainees:

**Ilaria Piovesan** is currently completing the MA in European Public Affairs at the Maastricht University Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences after having graduated (cum laude) from the LL.B. European Law School programme at Maastricht University. Her traineeship at MCEL commenced in September 2017.



**Kejda Revaj** is a student of the LL.M. International and European Tax Law, after having graduated (cum laude) from the LL.B. European Law School programme at Maastricht University. Her traineeship at MCEL commenced in September 2018.



**Alexandra Zaytseva** is currently completing the final year of the LL.B. European Law School programme. Her traineeship at MCEL commenced in September 2018.





## Grants and PhD Degrees

**In March**, Ana Ramalho was awarded a grant within the framework of the **WUN Research Mobility Programme**, which will allow her to conduct research in collaboration with the University of Auckland. The topic of the project is "Reconciliation of intellectual property policies in the framework of EU-New Zealand trade relations".

**In April**, Marcus Meyer successfully defended his **PhD** thesis entitled "The Position of Dutch Works Councils in Multinational Corporations". The thesis was supervised by Ferdinand Grapperhaus and Saskia Klosse.



**In May**, Hoai-Thu Nguyen was awarded her **PhD** after defending her thesis titled "An uneven balance? A legal analysis of power asymmetries between national parliaments in the EU". The PhD project was supervised by Aalt Willem Heringa and Wytze van der Woude.

**In June**, Zvezda Vankova obtained her **PhD** after defending her thesis on "Circular migration from the Eastern neighbourhood to the EU – the rights of migrant workers in Bulgaria and Poland". The PhD project was supervised by Hildegard Schneider and Maarten Vink.

**In July**, Pauline Melin defended her dissertation on "The External Dimension of EU Social Security Coordination" and obtained her **PhD**. The PhD thesis was supervised by Hildegard Schneider and Anne Pieter van der Mei.

**In July**, Vigiļenca Abazi was awarded a **VENI grant** of 250,000 euros from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) for her research project examining the legal position of whistleblowers in the EU. The research aims to deliver conceptual clarity and workable policy solutions for whistleblower protection.

**In September**, a new European-wide training network for early stage researchers in the field of disability rights received €4.1m in funding from the **European Commission's Marie Curie programme**. This network, entitled DARE (Disability Advocacy and Research for Europe), will be co-ordinated by the Centre for Disability Law and Policy at the National University of Ireland, Galway. Other partners come from Belgium, Iceland, Switzerland, Portugal, and the United Kingdom. Lisa Waddington will coordinate the project on behalf of Maastricht University.



In September, Andrea Broderick was awarded the **Edmond Hustinx price for Science 2018** for her research on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The award was announced during the official opening of the academic year 2018-2019.

In October, Maastricht University was awarded a large **H2020 project on the precautionary principle**. The project will last three years, starting in February 2019. MCEL Co-Director Ellen Vos will lead the Project Consortium together with Kristel De Smedt and colleagues from the Centre for European Research in Maastricht (CERiM). The project, entitled REconciling sScience, Innovation and Precaution through the Engagement of Stakeholders (RECIPES), will address the topical question as to how to protect health and safety of persons and the environment whilst promoting innovation.

Also in October, Stylianos Charitakis successfully defended his **PhD** thesis on 'The Challenges and the Consequences for the European Union of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities with a Focus on Accessibility'. The project was supervised by Lisa Waddington and Bruno de Witte.

In November, Annalisa Volpato successfully defended her **PhD** thesis and was awarded a double doctoral degree from Maastricht University and the University of Padova, Italy. Her thesis was titled 'Towards a legal framework for the delegation of Powers in the EU legal system' and was supervised by Ellen Vos and Bernardo Cortese (University of Padova).

In December, Šejla Imamovic obtained her **PhD**, successfully defending her thesis on 'Conflicts in European Fundamental Rights Protection: National and European Courts' Perspectives'. The thesis was supervised by Monica Claes and Petra Foubert (Hasselt University).



## Activities

**In January**, Diane Fromage and Thomas Christiansen (FASoS) co-organised the workshop “Recalibrating executive-legislative relations in the European Union” at the UM Campus in Brussels. The event hosted four panels over two days, featuring scholars and practitioners from prestigious universities and institutions. Gathering about 40 participants, including a diverse mix of academics with mostly legal and political science backgrounds and practitioners, the workshop took stock of the role of parliaments since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009.

At the end of January, Maja Brkan held two presentations at the conference “Computer, Privacy and Data Protection” (CPDP), which took place in Brussels on 24-26 January. In the first presentation, Maja spoke about the “Explainability of autonomous decisions”, while in the second one she presented her paper “The concept of essence of fundamental rights in the EU legal order: Peeling the onion to its core”.

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**In February**, Andrea Ott was invited to speak at two events organised by the University of Ankara at Ankara and Istanbul, Turkey (8-9 February). Both events dealt with the impact of Brexit on the EU and its further implications on the EU-Turkey customs union. Andrea Ott gave a presentation on the legal options structuring the future trade relations between EU and UK.

Later that month (22 February), Maja Brkan gave a presentation at the conference “Terminator or the Jetsons? The Economics and Policy Implications of Artificial Intelligence” at the Technology Policy Institute in Washington, DC. The conference featured ten new research papers on the economics and policy implications of artificial intelligence and machine learning. Maja's presentation was entitled “Do algorithms rule the world? Algorithmic decision-making and data protection in the framework of the GDPR and beyond”

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**In March**, Maja Brkan delivered a visiting lecture at the Yale Law School in the USA. She talked about “EU Data Privacy, Algorithmic Decision-Making, and the Right to Explanation”.

Later in March, former MCEL Associate Director Elise Muir (now of Leuven University) and Lisa Waddington participated in a Workshop on “Anti-Discrimination Law in Civil Jurisdictions” at Lincoln College, Oxford (15-16 March). Lisa Waddington presented a paper on The Relationship between Disability Non-discrimination Law and Quota Schemes: A Comparison between Common Law and Civil Law Jurisdictions in Europe, while Elise Muir commented on a paper on Polish non-discrimination law.



At the same time, in Maastricht Mariolina Eliantonio organised the third SoLaR workshop on “EU environmental soft law and its reception in the Member States” (14-16 March). The event brought together scholars from different European universities and practitioners to discuss the reception of EU environmental soft law at the national level.

At the end of March, Lisa Waddington also led a symposium at the Hosei University of Tokyo (31 March). The symposium, entitled: Empowering "Vulnerable" Consumers in the Market: Thinking and Talking about "Vulnerability" and Reasonable Accommodation, explored the situational nature of vulnerability and discussed various options for empowering consumers, including consumers with disabilities. Professor Waddington was invited to give the symposium after publishing an article on EU consumer law and "vulnerable" consumers in the European Law Review some years ago.

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**In April**, upon invitation of the Department of International Law from the Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia in Moscow, Marjan Peeters attended the XVI Blischenko Conference on Public International Law (14 April). The 2018 conference was dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In total, 589 participants from 48 states attended the Blischenko conference, during which Marjan held a plenary address on behalf of Maastricht University. The conference provided 19 expert workshops, and during the expert workshop on International Environmental Law, Marjan presented her paper "On Silent Objects and Barking Watchdogs: on the Role and Accountability of Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations". In the same week,

Marjan delivered two lectures and two classes. Central themes were the Paris Agreement and the Aarhus Convention.



Diane Fromage was invited to the Argentinian Chamber of Deputies to give a talk on Interparliamentary cooperation in the EU. Her presentation analysed the dynamics of interparliamentary cooperation among national parliaments and between national parliaments and the European Parliament. The changes introduced by the Lisbon Treaty were highlighted, as well as the challenges that still exist. This paved the ground for an interesting discussion with the participants on the differences and commonalities of cooperation within the EU and within Mercosur.

Diane Fromage was also invited to speak, together with Andrea Ott, at the first meeting of the Alumni Circle of the LL.M programmes European Law School and International Laws. Diane Fromage gave a master class on “The ECB’s accountability in the post-Banking Union era”, while Andrea Ott gave lecture within the framework of CLEER (Centre for the Law of EU External Relations) on “The Brexit conundrum: Stuck between Politics, EU and International Law”.

Also at the UM Campus in Brussels, Bilyana Petkova and Tuomas Ojanen from the University of Helsinki co-organized a workshop on the evolving role of online platforms (5 April). The event, titled “Fundamental Rights Protection Online: The Future Regulation of Intermediaries” discussed the European legislative and judicial responses to the evolving role of online platforms (Facebook, Twitter, other social media, blogging platforms, as well as online hosting portals and search engines).

The following day, the conference “Innov-AI-tion Law for Technology 4.0” was co-organised by Maja Brkan, Catalina Goanta and Ana Ramalho. The focus of the event was the exponential technological advancement of Artificial

Intelligence (AI), which is creating a pressing need for a clear legal framework that the EU is currently seeking to develop within Digital Single Market. Maja Brkan presented on the topic “Explanation of algorithmic decision making: GDPR and technical feasibility: legal perspectives” and chaired the second panel of the event, concerning AI. Ana Ramalho delivered one of the presentations in that panel, speaking about “Ownership and access



to data in the context of AI: legal perspectives”. Ana also chaired the last panel of the event.

April was also the month in which two TARN (The Academic Research Network on Agencification of EU Executive Governance) events took place in Brussels. First, the TARN workshop on “Agencification of EU executive governance” (11 April), designed to showcase the work of young researchers, who also received comments by senior academics. Then, the Conference on “Performance, Operability and the Accountability Overload of EU Agencies” (12-13 April) took a closer look at the current challenges which EU agencies are facing in their operations, and especially at whether the concept of ‘agency accountability’ should be modified in order to facilitate complex agency operations.

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**In May**, Diane Fromage was invited to give a seminar on "Banking Union and Accountability" at the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna in Pisa as part of the Jean Monnet module “European Public Law-ius” (15 May). The Jean Monnet module deals with issues, such as Brexit, the problematic accession of the EU to the ECHR, the difficulties connected to Article 7 TEU and the debate about the possibility to set up a sort of Copenhagen Commission, encouraging a critical and updated reflection on the most recent developments in the field of European Public Law.

Maja Brkan was invited to speak at the conference on “Essence of fundamental rights in EU Law”, organised by Elise Muir together with Mark Dawson and Orla Lynskey in Leuven, Belgium (17-18 May). In that occasion, Maja spoke about “The Essence of the Fundamental Right to Data Protection”.

Andrea Ott was invited to two international conferences. She first took part in the interdisciplinary European Union in International Affairs (EUIA) Conference in Brussels (16-17 May), where she presented her paper "Evading EU International Agreements in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice: Panacea or Poison?". She later attended the “International Federation of European Law” (FIDE) Conference in Estoril. Together with Professor Ramses Wessel (University Twente) she co-authored the Dutch national FIDE report on the external dimension of the EU policies (24-26 May).



Natassa Athanasiadou and Andreea Nastase (FASoS) co-organised a workshop on “Public Ethics and Integrity in the European Parliament and Commission” at the UM Campus in Brussels. The workshop brought together academics and practitioners from the EU institutions and NGOs and focused on topical issues of conflicts of interest, revolving doors and lobbying. It was co-funded by

the Centre for European Research in Maastricht (CERiM) and the Erasmus+ EU programme.

At the end of May, Vigjilence Abazi co-organised a two-day conference (29-30 May) on "Transparency of Independent Watchdogs" together with Diego Werneck Arguelhes at The Center for Technology & Society (CTS) of the Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGV) School of Law in Brazil. The keynote lecture was delivered by Professor David Pozen (Columbia Law School), tracing transparency’s drift in Western democracies from a progressive toward a more libertarian (or neoliberal) valence, and he offered some reflections on its causes and consequences.

On the same dates, Diane Fromage, Phedon Nicolaides and Paul Dermine co-organised a workshop entitled “The European Central Bank’s Accountability in a Multi-level European Order” at the UM Campus in Brussels. The workshop brought together academics and high-level experts from the EU institutions to discuss the accountability of the ECB in a post-crisis era.



The event was co-funded by the Faculty of Law of Maastricht, the Centre for European Research in Maastricht (CERiM) and the Universiteitsfonds Limburg. The papers are due to be published in a special issue of the Maastricht Journal of European and Comparative Law in 2019.

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**In June**, Ana Ramalho, Hildegard Schneider and Lisa Waddington organised the workshop “Feeling Art: Crafting Intellectual Property Law to Enhance Disability Access to Artistic Works through 3D Printing Technology” (25-26 June) at Maastricht University. The workshop aimed at mapping disability exceptions worldwide and at reaching an understanding of the status quo from the point of view of copyright law, disability law and

art law, with the goal of recommending a harmonisation of the topic under public international law, considering all the interests concerned.

Andrea Ott organised the CLEER summer school on the Law of EU External Relations (25-29 June) at the UM Campus in Brussels. The fourth edition of the CLEER summer school included 21 interactive lectures delivered by renowned academics and experienced practitioners, covering fundamental aspects such as competences and mixed



agreements, institutions in external relations and the external dimension of EU policies. The final day of the Brussels summer school was devoted to Brexit and EU external relations and Bruno De Witte delivered the key note on "The use of international law in the relations between the EU and the UK".

Andrea Ott also attended the roundtable of external relations experts from practice and academia on "Recent Developments in EU External Relations Law" at the University of Luxembourg. The roundtable, organised by Professor Eleftheria Neframi and Dr. Mauro Gatti, discussed case law, the autonomy of the EU legal order and the international representation of the EU.

At the end of June, a conference was held in Maastricht to mark the 25th anniversary of the Maastricht Journal of European and Comparative Law (28 June). The conference brought together original members of the Editorial Board, as well as current authors and readers of the journal. The theme of the conference was "Bridging the Past and the Future" and covered both comparative law and EU law. Monica Claes, Bruno de Witte, who was one of the original members of the Editorial Board, and Lisa Waddington, who was the journal's first executive editor, all spoke at the conference, in a panel which also included Professor Paul Craig, Professor Gráinne de Búrca and Kieran Bradley.



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**In July**, Pauline Melin and Zvezda Vankova participated in the panel "Migrants' Access to Welfare in the European Union: Policy Transformations and Migrants' Experiences in Times of Crisis" which was part of the IPSA World Congress of Political Science in Brisbane, Australia. They presented the paper "Social protection in the EU and beyond: a legal analysis of the EU and Member States' responses to the crises" which built on their work for the MitSoPro project coordinated by University of Liege.



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**In August**, Maja Brkan presented on "Privacy Challenges of Artificial Intelligence" at the 13<sup>th</sup> edition of the IFIP summer school on Privacy and Identity Management, which took place in Vienna on 20-24 August.

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**In September**, MCEL inaugurated the new academic year with its annual Academic Opening Conference (11 September). This year, the event covered "Legal Issues and



New Developments in the Digital Single Market". Gathered in the Groote Sociëteit, MCEL members and students discussed the challenges and opportunities resulting from digitalisation. The event featured presentations by Maja Brkan and by two external speakers, namely David Friggieri, Legal and Policy Officer at the European Commission Unit on Audio-visual and Media Services, and Peggy Valcke, Research Professor of ICT and Media Law at KU Leuven.

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**In October**, Lisa Waddington and Andrea Broderick, together with Anna Lawson of Leeds University (UK), hosted in Maastricht a conference on “The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Practice: A Comparative Analysis of the Role of Courts” (25-26 October). The two-day event presented a coordinated series of accounts of how the CRPD is being used and interpreted in domestic courts in a variety of jurisdictions. The conference drew on the emerging field of comparative international law to provide a critical analysis of the factors which underpin the extent and nature of the use of the CRPD by domestic courts.



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**In November**, the conference “25 Years of the Maastricht Treaty: Celebrating the successes and facing the challenges”, was organised on the anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty (1 November). The event, hosted by the Provincie Limburg and co-organised by Maastricht University, ITEM and the civil society organisation *New Europeans* celebrated the successes of the Maastricht Treaty, but also discussed the challenges for the European Union resulting from Brexit, populism and threats to the rule of law. The event hosted presentations by many distinguished speakers, including Hildegard Schneider, Lisa Waddington and Bruno de Witte.



At the end of November, MEP György Schöpflin visited the Faculty of Law to present at the MCEL and TARN event on “EU Agencies, Common Approach and Parliamentary Scrutiny” (19 November). György Schöpflin is member of the Constitutional Affairs (AFCO) committee of the European Parliament and the rapporteur of AFCO’s own initiative report on EU agencies, drawn up with the contribution of Ellen Vos, and presented to the AFCO committee on 27 November.

## Research seminars

The MCEL research seminars are monthly research events for which distinguished scholars are invited to talk about current developments within the law. The following research seminars took place in 2018:

**In January**, the research seminar hosted **Gareth Davies**, Professor of European Law at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. In his presentation “Strategies of resistance to the Court of Justice: interpretative pluralism”, Prof. Davies outlined the existing tensions between the CJEU and the national courts, proposing the adoption of interpretative pluralism as a way forward.

**In February**, the research seminar featured a presentation by **Gaelle Dusepulchre**, permanent representative to the EU at FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights). Gaelle Dusepulchre focused on the human rights aspects of EU external relations and trade relations. She also discussed the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) which is one of the EU's main tools to promote human rights in third countries, as well as the current state of play of Business and Human Rights. Future opportunities and steps forwards to achieve better human rights protection were also discussed.

**In March**, the guest of the research seminar was **Bart van der Sloot** from the Tilburg Institute for Law, Technology, and Society (TILT) of Tilburg University, who specialises in the area of Privacy and Big Data. In his talk “Beyond the access-use debate: regulating the analysis of information in the Big Data era in order to ensure reliability and trustworthiness”, he presented some options to ameliorate the existing regulatory framework.

**In April**, MCEL welcomed **Harm Schepel**, Professor of Economic Law at Kent Law School and the Brussels School of International Studies, University of Kent. In his presentation “The Interaction between EU Law and International Investment Law after *Achmea*”, he commented on the latest developments in international investment law.



**In May**, MCEL was delighted to host **Giacinto della Cananea**, Professor of Administrative Law and EU Administrative Law at University of Rome Tor Vergata (Italy) and principal investigator under the ERC Advanced Grant for the research project on the “Common Core of European Administrative Laws” (COCEAL). Giacinto della Cananea presented his paper ‘The ‘Common Core’ of Administrative Laws in Europe: A Framework for Analysis’ (co-authored with Mauro Bussani) to a crowded Board Room, as the seminar also welcomed Master students of the Faculty of Law.



**In October**, after the summer break, the research seminars resumed with a talk by **Jean-Paul Keppenne**, director of the Legal Service of the European Commission, in charge of all Eurozone-related issues. In his talk, titled “The Future of Eurozone Governance”, Jean-Paul Keppenne took stock of the various reforms that the Eurocrisis precipitated, highlighting the remaining gaps in the architecture of the Euro, and the challenges ahead. He also looked at the future developments in the field, especially in relation to the various proposals tabled by the European Commission in December 2017 and May 2018.

**In November**, the research seminar hosted **Katarzyna Granat**, Marie Curie fellow at Durham University. In her presentation “National Courts as ‘First Responders’ to the Rule of Law Crisis in the European Union”, she discussed the contribution of Member State courts to the enforcement of the rule of law in the European Union (EU), especially in comparison with more political instruments available to the European Commission, such as the Article 7 TEU procedure.

**In December**, the last research seminar of 2018 offered a rare glimpse into the concrete functioning of the Court of Justice of the European Union. The speaker, **Alexandre Saydé**, provided meaningful insights into the actual making of a judgment based on his 7 years of experience as a référendaire at the Court.

## Forums

MCEL also organises forums where members - PhD scholars as well as more senior scholars - present their current research or discuss current developments in the law. These meetings were named “research forums” until June 2018 (academic year 2017-2018), and “members’ forum” from September onwards (academic year 2018-2019).

**In January**, the first research forum of 2018 hosted **Bilyana Petkova** and, exceptionally, an external speaker, namely **Cristina Fasone**, lecturer of Comparative Public Law at the LUISS Guido Carli University in Rome. Bilyana presented on the topic “Leading Rights: On Dignity, Free Speech and Privacy”, outlining how the protection of universal principles varies across different jurisdictions. Cristina Fasone presented her research on “Parliamentary representation and accountability in the Eurozone”.

**In February**, the research forum took the format of a case-law analysis and discussion. **Anne Pieter van der Mei** walked the attendees through some of the most relevant CJEU judgements delivered in the past years, laying the ground for a discussion on the outcome case *C-16/16 P Belgium v Commission*, decided earlier that day, dealing with the reviewability of soft law instruments.

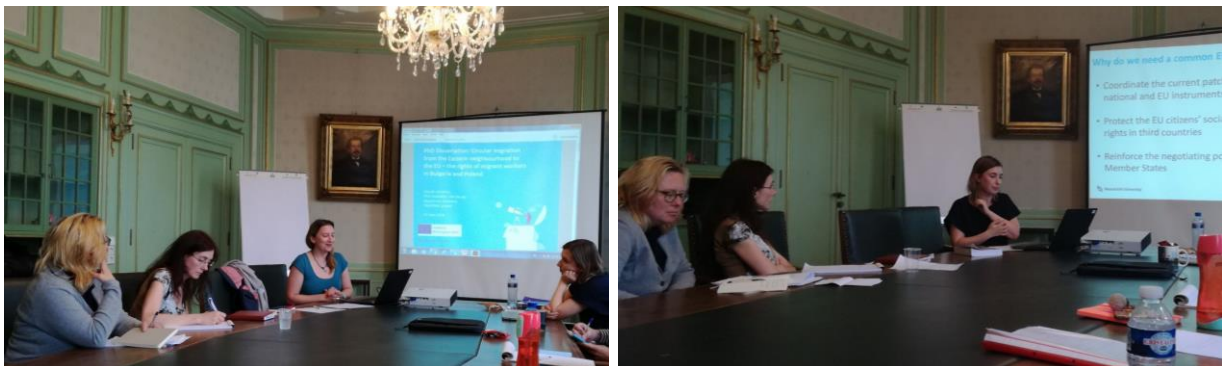
**In March**, the research forum featured two presentations, the first by **Jens Hillebrand Pohl**, and the second by **Nicola Gundt**. Jens discussed the long-awaited preliminary ruling by the CJEU on the Case C-284/16 *Achmea*. Nicola’s presentation focused instead on two cases on collective dismissal originating in Poland (Case C-149/16 *Socha* and Case C-429/16 *Ciupa*) and, in broader terms, on the concept of ‘dismissal’ and other relevant terminations in the sense of Art. 1(b) in line of Directive 98/59.



**In April, Diane Fromage** presented her research on “Accountability in the Banking Union” at the monthly research forum. In her analysis of the existing institutional framework, Diane considered both the ECB's and the SRB's relationships to the Council, as well as the one to national and European parliaments. Her presentation highlighted the specificities of the mechanisms in place, as well as some potential shortcomings.

**In May**, the research forum took the format of a mock-defense, where **Hoai-Thu Nguyen** presented the findings of her PhD. Her thesis, titled “An Uneven Balance? A Legal Analysis of Power Asymmetries Between National Parliaments in the EU”, explores the role that national parliaments play for representative democracy in the EU almost a decade after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon. Thu successfully defended her PhD thesis on 25 May 2018.

**In June**, other two mock-defenses took place at the monthly research forum. The first by **Zvezda Vankova** on “Circular migration from the Eastern neighbourhood to the EU – the rights of migrant workers in Bulgaria and Poland”, and the second one by and **Pauline Melin** on “The External Dimension of EU Social Security Coordination: Towards a Common EU Approach”. Zvezda and Pauline successfully obtained their PhDs on 27 June and 2 July 2018, respectively.



**In September**, the first members' forum after the summer break hosted the presentation of the visiting researcher **John Gerasimos**, as well as the mock-defense of **Stylianos Charitakis**. John's presentation concerned the relationship between the national constitutional identity of the Member States of the European Union as enshrined in Article 4 § 2 of the TEU with a common European constitutional identity. Stylianos presentation explored instead the nature of the obligations of Article 9 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) with regard to accessibility and examined how and to what extent the European Union (EU) is competent to implement these obligations through legislative or other forms of policy-making. Stylianos successfully defended his PhD on 11 October 2018.

**In October**, the members' forum took place together with the annual inventory of the members' research activities. **Annalisa Volpato** presented the findings of her PhD research titled "Towards a legal framework for the delegation of powers in the EU legal system". In her presentation, the analysis of delegation of powers was not confined to delegated acts pursuant to Article 290 TFEU, but also included the transferral of powers to the European Commission pursuant to Article 291 TFEU, to the Council of the EU, to the ECB, and to EU agencies. Annalisa successfully defended her PhD a few days after the forum, on 9 November 2018.

**In November**, the last member's forum of 2018 hosted the mock-defense of **Šejla Imamovic**. In her thesis, titled "Resolving Conflicts in European Fundamental Rights Protection. National and European Courts' Perspectives", Šejla explored the tension experienced by national courts in upholding the national Constitution, while, at the same time, ensuring compliance of their state with the ECHR, EU law and EU fundamental rights. Šejla successfully defended her PhD on 12 December 2018.

# Publications by MCEL Members

## Books



Heringa, A. W., van der Velde, J., Verhey, L. F. M., & van der Woude, W. (2018). *Staatsrecht*. (13ed.) Deventer: Kluwer. ISBN: 9789013146172.



Klosse, S., & Vonk, G. J. (2018). *Hoofdzaken socialezekerheidsrecht*. (3 ed.) (Bakelsinstituut). The Hague: Boom Juridisch. ISBN: 9789462904453



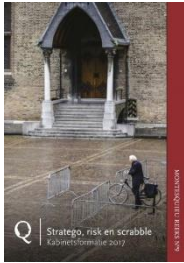
Schoenmaekers, S., & Delille, M. (2018). *10-jarige aansprakelijkheid in de bouwwereld*. Turnhout: Brepols Publishers. ISBN: 9789087641306

## Edited Books



Heringa, A. W., Hardt, S., & Waltermann, A. (Eds.) (2018). *Bevrijdende en begrenzende soevereiniteit*. (Montesquieu Reeks). The Hague: Boom Juridisch. ISBN: 9789462905740

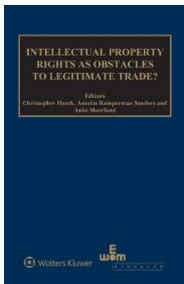




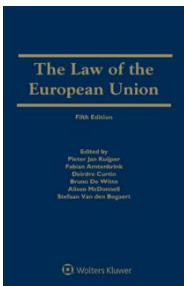
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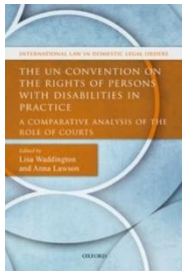
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