

Workshop in Riga (Latvia) on 7 – 8 September 2017

Report

The annual workshop on environmental law was dedicated to „Administrative sanctions - orders and execution measures - in case of environmental infringements”.

The workshop was attended by 25 AEAJ members from 12 countries (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Finland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Sweden).

The event was organized locally by working group member **Lauma Čebotarenoka-Paeglkalna**, who has recently been elected as chair of the Association of Latvian Administrative Judges. We owe many thanks to her !

The event was supported by the Association of Administrative Judges of the hosting country and by the Faculty of Law of the University of Latvia, which had provided a beautiful conference hall.

Ms **Veronika Krūmiņa**, President of the Department of Administrative Cases of the Supreme Court of Latvia, gave a welcome speech.

As usual we began with a report on “Recent developments of EU environmental law”, this time given by **Indrė Žvaigždinienė**, lecturer at the Law Faculty of the Vilnius University. Beginning with general observations she later drew our attention to several measures of the EU Commission to promote the enforcement of EU law.

Then we viewed a video (available under: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1sd68KDW3uY>) on the protected nature areas in Latvia, which demonstrated the rich natural heritage of this country.

The second speaker was **Vojtěch Vomáčka** assistant judge, Supreme Administrative Court of the Czech Republic. He gave us a broad overview of the influence both of EU law and the European Convention on Human Rights on the subject matter of the workshop. His findings were based on a profound analysis of the jurisprudence both of the CJEU and the ECHR.

Carole Billiet, research director Environmental Law U.Gent, continued and focused at first on the enforcement policy of the EU and the obligations of the Member States deriving from EU law. Afterwards she dealt with the various sanction systems of the Member States.

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The main issue of the workshop was comparative law. In preparation a detailed questionnaire (drafted by **Anders Bengtsson**, senior judge at the Växjö Land and Environment Court, Sweden,) was sent out requesting responses from each country represented at the workshop amounting to 76 pages altogether.(see the document “Questionnaire”). In addition 5 colleagues at the conference presented their national sanctioning system, namely **Lilly Weidemann** from the Administrative Court of Bremen (Germany), **Marco Morgantini** from the Administrative Court of Venice (Italy), **Sinikka Kangasmaa** from the Administrative Court of Vaasa (Finland), **René Seerden** from the Court of Limburg (Netherlands) and **Carole Billiet** (for Belgium).

Apart from these lectures an interactive session took place as usual. **Anders Bengtsson** had drafted a case study based on an environmental scandal which occurred in Sweden in the early 1970s. This case gave rise to lively discussion in multinational sub-groups which presented their findings later to the plenary.

Regarding the result of all comparative law studies see “Summary and Introduction” on page 4 of the document “Questionnaire”.

As usual the workshop also included touristic and social events (see the document “Agenda”).

W. Heermann