



Workshop in Salzburg (Austria) on 30 - 31 August 2018

Report

The annual workshop on environmental law was dedicated to „The Aarhus Convention with a focus on Access to Information and Access to Justice”.

The workshop was attended by 29 AEAJ members from 13 countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, Germany, Finland, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom). Our honorary member from Japan and a speaker from the European Commission was also participating in this workshop. The event was organized locally by working group member Barbara Weiss. We owe many thanks to her!

The event was held in cooperation with the EU Commission and the Salzburg University and with the support of the Landeshauptmannschaft Salzburg and the Union for Public Service. The Salzburg University had provided a beautiful conference hall.

Landtagspräsidentin Dr. Brigitta Pallauf’s welcome speech was followed by introductory speeches by professor Michael Geistlinger, Salzburg University, and by the president of our association, Edith Zeller.

Then Martin Köhler, presiding judge at the Verwaltungsgerichtshof, gave us a presentation of Austrian environmental law.

The second speaker was Fruzsina Bögös, judge at the Budapest-Capital Administrative and Labour Court, who gave an overview of the Aarhus Convention and her work as a member of the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee.

Daniele Franzone, senior expert -European Commission – DG Environment gave a presentation of the latest developments regarding the EU case-law related to the Aarhus Convention and the Notice from the European Commission of 28 April 2017.

In the afternoon Holger Böhmann, judge at the Federal Administrative Court in Leipzig (Germany), presented the recent EU case-law related to Access to Environmental Information and then guided us through a case study on Access to Environmental Information.

On Friday Julia Menguser, Salzburg University, gave a presentation of the Self-executing character of the Aarhus Convention from the Austrian law perspective.

Matthias Keller, presiding judge at the Administrative Court of Aachen (Germany) and co-chair of the working group on environmental law, had prepared a questionnaire, which was sent out in advance to the workshop, requesting responses from each country represented at the workshop. He presented the results on the different approaches and problems met in the Member States. He then introduced us to a session in a moot court where some of the participants acted as the court, some as representatives of the administration and some as representatives of very active ENGOs.

Before summing up, yours truly gave a short view of the Espoo Convention and the work in the Implementation Committee connected to that Convention.

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

/A Bengtsson