

ACADEMIC NETWORK FOR LEGAL STUDIES ON IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM IN EUROPE

“THE ODYSSEUS NETWORK”

*A NETWORK CREATED WITH THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE
ODYSSEUS PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION
&
CO-ORDINATED BY THE UNIVERSITÉ LIBRE DE BRUXELLES*



PRESENTATION

**Report of activities 2005
&
perspectives for 2006**

HOW TO CONTACT THE NETWORK

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PRESENTATION

The Academic Network for Legal Studies on Immigration and Asylum in Europe has been created with the financial support of the Odysseus programme of the European Commission. This network, launched at the beginning of 1999, was initiated by Philippe De Bruycker, Professor at the Institute for European Studies of the Université Libre de Bruxelles (U.L.B.). It brings together specialists on Aliens Law from the Member States of the European Union. Its mission is, on the one hand, to carry out legal research and to offer expert opinions, either on its own initiative or on request, on the other hand, to exchange and diffuse as widely as possible legal analysis in the field of Immigration and Asylum Law in Europe. The national laws of each Member State of the European Union in a comparative perspective as well as Community Law are taken into consideration. Our work includes research reports and scientific congresses, the results of which are published, as well as training sessions and educational programmes. An internet site presenting the Network and providing information on Aliens law in Europe has been set up at the following address: <http://www.ulb.ac.be/assoc/odysseus>.

COMPOSITION

At present, the network is made up of mainly academics from the Member States of the European Union who are well-known specialists on Aliens Law in their country. In addition to the founder, Philippe DE BRUYCKER and a researcher Nathalie JOUANT (Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium), it brings together Jean-Yves CARLIER (Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium), Kay HAILBRONNER (Universitaet Konstanz, Germany), Cristina GORTÁZAR and Emiliano GARCIA COSO (Universidad Pontificia Comillas de Madrid, Spain), Elspeth GUILD (British Institute for International and Comparative Law) and Ryszard CHOLEWINSKI (IOM Geneva) for United Kingdom, François JULIEN-LAFERRIERE (Université de Paris-Sud) and Henri LABAYLE (Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour, Faculté de Bayonne) for France, Olivier LANG and François MOYSE (Lawyers, Luxembourg), Bruno NASCIMBENE (Università degli Studi di Milano, Italy), John HANDOLL (Lawyer, Ireland), Örjan EDSTRÖM (Umeå Universitet) and Gregor NOLL (Lunds Universitet) for Sweden, Rudolf FEIK and Ulrike BRANDL (Universität Salzburg) for Austria, Jens VEDSTED-HANSEN (Aarhus Universitet, Denmark), Achilles SKORDAS (University of Bristol) and Nicholas SITAROPOULOS (Council of Europe)s) for Greece, Thomas SPIJKERBOER (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) and Kees GROENENDIJK (Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen) for the Netherlands, Constança DIAS URBANO DE SOUSA (Universidade Autonoma de Lisboa) and Nuno PIÇARRA (Universidade Nova de Lisboa) for Portugal, Martin SCHEININ (Åbo Akademi) et Eeva NYKANEN (Turun Yliopisto) for Finland, Boldizsar NAGY (Eötvös Lorand Tudományegyetem, Budapest, Hungary), Barbara MIKOLAJCZYK (Uniwersytet Śląski, Katowice) for Poland and Lyra JAKULEVICIENE (Mykolo Romerio Universitetas) for Lithuania. Vigdis VEVSTAD who is an independent consultant with an academic background, joined the Network as a representative of Norway (that non EU Member State has been accepted due to the close links it has with the EU through the Schengen cooperation). The Network is progressively enlarging to representatives coming from the ten new Member States and will welcome four new members from Latvia, Malta, Slovakia and Slovenia in 2006. Every interested qualified person coming from a Member State not yet represented (Cyprus, Estonia, and Czech Republic) is encouraged to send a letter with a detailed academic CV to our secretariat. The Network maintains close relations with the Directorate-General "Justice, Liberty and Security" (DG JLS) of the European Commission and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

ACTIVITIES

COMPARATIVE LEGAL STUDIES AND BOOKS

In 1999, the Network undertook its first study, which covers regularisation of Illegal Immigrants in the European Union. The results were presented during a European conference on 30 June 2000, held at the Université Libre de Bruxelles and were published in 2000 in a book entitled: "The regularisation of illegal immigrants in the European Union" under the supervision of Philippe De Bruycker. Another comparative study has been carried on during the year 2001 on the Protection of Displaced Persons Complimentary to the Refugee Status This project was co-ordinated by Daphné Bouteillet-Paquet, Phd from the University of Paris I. The results of this research were presented at a conference held on 16-17 November 2001 organised in co-operation with the University of Konstanz with the financial support of the US German Marshall Fund. The proceedings of the Conference have been published in a book entitled "Subsidiary Protection of Refugees in the European Union: Complementing the Geneva Convention ? Following three congresses organised by the Network respectively in Brussels, Lisbon and Paris, three other books entitled respectively "The Emergence of a European Immigration Policy", "The Emergence of a European Asylum Policy", "The European Immigration and Asylum Policy: A Critical Assessment five years after Amsterdam" have been published between 2003 and 2005. The Network develops since 2003 comparative studies on the transposition of the European directives adopted in the field of immigration and asylum and on Aliens law in the Member States of the European Union. The first results on three directives (temporary protection, carrier sanctions and mutual recognition of expulsion decisions) have been published in 2005 under the title "Immigration and Asylum law of the EU: current debates". The next book to be published at the beginning of 2006 dealing with "The Future of the free movement of EU citizens" provides an in-depth analysis of the new directive 2004/38 and the jurisprudence of the Court. All our books can be ordered from Bruylant Publishing, 67, rue de la Régence, 1000 Brussels, Tel: 0032 (0) 2 5129845, Fax: 0032 (0) 2 5117202, email: info@bruylant.be. The Network will undertake in 2006 on behalf of the European Commission and in partnership with UNHCR a comparative study on the transposition and implementation of the directive on reception conditions for asylum seekers.

EUROPEAN CONGRESS FOR LAWYERS SPECIALISED IN THE AREA OF IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM

In order to make its activities known to a wider audience, the Network has decided to organise at least every two years a European Congress with a view of bringing together lawyers specialised in Immigration and Asylum Law in Europe. The first Congress was held in Brussels the 1st and the 2nd of December 2000 on the topic: "Which immigration policy for the European Union? An assessment of Maastricht and the prospects offered by Amsterdam". A second Congress was organised in Lisbon 2002 on the subject of "The emergence of a European Asylum policy: Amsterdam, Tampere and the future". A third Congress was held in the Assemblée Nationale in Paris on 10 and 11 June 2004 with the aim to evaluate the process leading to a European Immigration and Asylum policy between Mai 1999 and May 2004. The next one supposed to be organised in Finland at the end of 2006 will deal with the "Common European Asylum System" in a prospective way on the basis of The Hague programme. The Network has also decided to study in 2006 the question of the interoperability of databases of aliens (SIS, Eurodac, VIS) in view of a congress planned for 2007.

INTERNET FORUM OF RESEARCH ON ALIENS LAW

In order to allow European academics specialised in the fields of Immigration and Asylum to publicise their work and to explore the potential benefits of collaboration at a European level, pages entitled « European Forum of Research on Aliens law» have been opened on the network's Internet site. These are intended for research centres, researchers (in particular those having carried out or currently writing a doctoral thesis, including those seeking employment as researchers), authors of specialised publications and directors of teaching programmes specialised in Immigration and Asylum Law in Europe.

TEACHING AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES

The Network has extended its activities to teaching and training. It organises since 2001 a Summer School on European Union Law and Policy in the field of Immigration and Asylum which is held at the Université Libre de Bruxelles during the two first weeks of July. The aim of the Summer School is to provide its participants with a general understanding of the immigration and asylum policy of the European Union. The classes are conducted by academics of the fifteen member States of the European Union, in collaboration with officials from the European institutions (in particular the Unit Immigration and Asylum of the Directorate General Justice, Liberty and Security of the European Commission) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The European Summer School appears to be a success: more than 150 participants with diverse background (students, researchers, professors, national and international civil servants, representatives of NGOs, judges, advocates, etc) from all over the European Union and the acceding countries and even further take part in that event. A sixth edition will take place during the summer of 2006. The Network currently envisages to create a one year programme specialised on European Immigration and Asylum Law and to launch it possibly in September 2006. The Network will also develop for 2007 long distance e-training modules based on the use of new technologies (internet, video) in cooperation with IOM and UNHCR in the framework of the Soderkoping Process. The Network is also cooperating with different governments of Member States to the creation of a European Asylum Curricula (EAC).

OPERATIONAL MATTERS

A CORE COORDINATION TEAM

The Network does not aim at becoming a new institution, but wishes to remain a core team collaborating with correspondents in the Member States of the European Community. In addition to the Founder of the Network, Philippe De Bruycker, the co-ordination team is composed of Nicole Bosmans, Administrative Secretary, and Nathalie Jouant, Researcher. The co-ordination team is based at the Université Libre de Bruxelles. The working languages of the Network are French and English.

NEW TECHNOLOGY AS A MEANS OF EXCH@NGE: ODYSSEUS@ULB.AC.BE

Owing to financial and geographical constraints, the members of the Network meet only twice or three times per year in Brussels. They do however maintain regular contact using electronic mail. The co-ordination team keeps the members of the Network regularly informed of the activities, asks for information on national legislation and incorporates their remarks in the research reports. Anyone who is interested can register on our mailing list via the "contact" page on our Website to be regularly informed about the network's activities by e-mail.

HTTP://WWW.ULB.AC.BE/ASSOC/ODYSSEUS

The construction of an Internet site intended to make the activities of the Network known was undertaken from the very beginning. At the request of the European Commission, its development has become part of the priorities of the Network. It presents the activities of the Network; it includes a presentation of each of its members, the pages « European Research Forum on Aliens law » as well as a page which allows the reader to enter into contact via email with the team of co-ordination. Information web pages on the national legislation of the Member States in the fields of Immigration and Asylum law were progressively opened during the last months of 2001. New pages providing an in-depth presentation of the European Immigration and Asylum policy will be opened in 2006/2007. The establishment of links with the Europa site of the European Commission as well as the web-sites of universities and research centres of the members of the Network ensures the promotion of the site.