

## CONFERENCES AND REPORTS

### BRATISLAVA LEGAL FORUM 2021

#### ONLINE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC CONFERENCE HELD BY COMENIUS UNIVERSITY IN BRATISLAVA, FACULTY OF LAW

The Bratislava Legal Forum has been a traditional international academic conference organized by the Comenius University Law Faculty in Bratislava since 2013. Due to the pandemic regulations, the 2021 conference was held fully on-line on 22 and 23 April.

The topic of the plenary session was “Law in Crisis and Crisis in Law”. Undoubtedly, the topic covers more general contexts; however, it is extremely relevant in the recent situation. The titles of some presentations suggest that their focus was on certain aspects and impacts of the pandemic (“European Economic Law in the Pandemic Crisis”, “The Covid19 Pandemic as a Challenge for Liberal Democracies”, “The Judiciary and the Person of a Judge during Pandemic”, “Crisis of Criminal Law in a State of Emergency”). The European context was dealt with in presentations entitled “How to Enforce the Fundamental Values of the European Union” and “Law in Crisis or Law as a Tool for Resolving the Crisis? The experience of a Member of the European Court of Auditors”. The recent Slovak judicial reform was also tackled (“Judicial Reform – Impacts of Constitutional and Legal Changes of 2020 on the Functioning of the Supreme Court of the Slovak Republic”). One detail seems to be quite significant, namely, a question raised in one of the introductory presentations whether we should speak of the crisis of law or rather of the crisis of the culture of law.

The plenary session was followed by 16 sessions: The Theory of Law and Social Sciences concerning “The Crisis of Authorities and Values in Current Society”; Roman Law, Canon Law and Ecclesiastical Law with “Inspirations from Roman and Canon law in the period of crisis of value principles in law”; Legal History and Comparative Law looked at the “Legal Terminology in modern Slovak law”; International Law and International Relations using “International Law and Crisis – Impacts and Challenges”; Constitutional Law focusing on “Constitutional Bodies and Constitutional Protection of Fundamental Rights during Special Situations”; Administrative Law with the topic “Current Challenges for Administrative Justice”; Environmental Law and Climate Law by addressing “Waste management and climate change during the corona crisis”; Financial Law with the topic “Current challenges for Financial Law”; Business Law and Economic Law by analysing “Legislative and application inventiveness in business law during the COVID-19 pandemic”; Labour Law and Social Security Law with the topic of “Implementation of social rights during pandemic”; Civil Law by looking at the “Determinants of Values in Civil Law during the crisis”; Criminal Law, Criminology and Criminalistics with the topic “Cybercrime in the time of crisis”; European Law by going through the “Rule of law in crises and crisis of rule of law. Challenges and Scenarios for European integration”; Information Technology Law and Intellectual Property Law was presented using “Technologies in times of crisis: threat or opportunity to law?”; Clinical Legal Education concerning “In discriminate leges silent? (Are Laws Silent during Crisis?)”; and Interdisciplinary section with the topic “Relations among legal professions”.

More than 220 papers were submitted to be included in the conference programme. Fourteen countries were represented by more than 50 colleagues, of which about 20 were from the Czech Republic. The languages of the conference were Slovak, Czech, and English. Peer-reviewed proceedings will be compiled as the main publication outcome.

In addition to the plenary session, I took part in the Administrative Law session with the highest number of presentations (28). The topic focussing on administrative judiciary might seem rather remote from the central topic of the conference, but the content of many presentations dealing with specific issues proved to the contrary. What can be mentioned are certain concerns with respect to the establishment of the Supreme Administrative Court in Slovakia. The pandemic was focused on

in presentations dealing with crisis measures and other aspects of solution of emergency situations. What can be given as an example are proceedings conducted at least partly by distance (on-line). The crisis reflections include a certain hesitation with respect to the prepared recodification of the Slovak public construction law; its comparison with hesitation regarding the new Czech construction law can be the topic of some future academic events.

Thanks are owed to the organizers of the conference primarily because they managed to maintain the tradition of annual meetings of representatives of academia and legal practice even in the current uneasy circumstances. Mutual contacts are important and even a distant contact was encouraging. Let us hope that the 2022 Legal Forum will be held in a regular manner, this is *vis a vis*.

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