



Prof. Michele Graziadei

Elfa President Report to the General Assembly 2019

Torino, 12 April 2019

It is a task of the President of the Association to present to the General assembly of the Association a report of activities relating to the past year for approval (art. 28.4 of the ELFA articles of incorporation).

In compliance with this requirement, I am therefore submitting to the debate and to the approval by the ELFA General Assembly the annual report regarding the activities of the Association during my Presidency, from April 2018 to April 2019.

I am pleased to deliver this report at the presence of delegates from Universities representing 28 countries, at the closing of a Conference with an attendance of 120 distinguished Deans and Colleagues, representing all subjects in the field of law.

The ELFA Board activities carried out in this period relate essentially to the meetings of the Board, and to the various activities carried out to advance the mission of the Association and the initiatives that ELFA is promoting.

A. Board meetings

The Elfa Board held two meetings: one in Warsaw, a second in Toulouse.

1. Meeting in Warsaw

The meeting in Warsaw was held at the Faculty of Law of the University of Warsaw on the 18th and 19th of July 2018. Prof. Marek Grzybowski kindly took upon himself the task to organise the meeting. At this meeting, three key topics were discussed:

- the recovery of the European Journal of Legal Education;
- the possibility of providing assistance to Faculties intending to improve legal education, especially at the post graduate and doctoral level;

- the preparation of the 2019 Meeting and General Assembly of the Association.

Concerning the first point, namely the possibility to start again the publication of the European Journal of Legal Education, Professor Marek Grzybowski, who is in charge of the project, has worked together with Professor Nigel Duncan and Professor Greta Bosch to prepare a new editorial project for the Journal. This should be an open access, peer reviewed journal. Even though several financial and technical aspects have yet to be decided, in Warsaw the Board agreed to nominate an Editorial Board chaired by Professor Grzybowski, and composed by Professors Anne Klebes-Pelissier; Halûk Kabaalioglu; Jacek Petzel; Manuel Bermejo, and Laurence Gormley. This is provisional list, that is open to integration.

The project of the Journal was further discussed at the Toulouse meeting, as reported below.

The second point discussed in Warsaw concerned the possibility to offer assistance to Universities that intend to improve legal education, especially at the post graduate or doctoral level. While ELFA has now established a regulation concerning summer programs that may obtain an ELFA label, the Association has not so far offered this kind of services. It would probably be difficult to go in this direction, not only for practical reasons, but also because ELFA is a non-profit entity, and to get the Association systematically involved in this type of consulting activity may even raise doubts as to its fiscal status.

On the other hand, the Board considered that one of the functions of the Association is to strengthen the bonds among its members, and this could be done in various ways, in this context too, as the requests that the Association has received in this respect fall squarely within its purposes. The way to organise collaborations fulfilling these needs are now under consideration by the Board, and one possibility is to propose to the action in this field, as a form of enhanced collaboration among its Members to be supported by the Association.

Finally, in Warsaw we laid down the foundations of the Torino Conference, by choosing its topic, and setting up the panels of the conference. We are gratefully to all the speakers who took the floor, we hope that you found in our yearly Conference a congenial environment to debate the problems relating to the present and the future of legal education in Europe and beyond.

2. Meeting in Toulouse

The meeting in Toulouse took place on the 29th-30 of January. We were received by the Dean Prof. Philippe Nélidoff and Prof. Lukas Rass-Masson, who secured the presence of the Toulouse Law Faculty in the Association, and to whom we are very grateful for taking the initiative to host the Board of the Association and for support to it.

The meeting was the occasion to discuss with the presence of a number of representative from the members of the Association of the European jurist project, and more broadly about the future of European legal education. The European jurist

project responds to a long-term investment of the association in the idea of a truly European system of legal education, and is one of the landmark projects of the Association

At the Toulouse meeting the Board had the opportunity to deepen the discussion concerning the feasibility of the European legal education journal, with particular regard to the sustainability of the project as a long-term project involving the financial support of the Association. This is clearly a concern for us. A number of options were examined, and are to be finalised, including the date of the publication of the first issue of the journal, the setting up of an advisory board and of a team of reviewers.

A good part of the Toulouse meeting was then dedicated to the organisation of the Torino conference, and in particular to the need to develop an action which should highlight which learning needs should be considered as more urgent in today's Europe. From a bottom up perspective, European and comparative law remain strong allies, together with a number of related and important subjects which are increasingly important for the formation of students. This led to the idea to have a panel on the role of comparative law at the Supreme courts, which would give voice to the increased recognition that in many European countries comparative law gets from supreme court judges.

The meeting in Toulouse was also dedicated to set up the procedures for next round of the ELFA Award. I was responsible for these procedures together with Professor Laurence Gormley for the year 2018. This year the responsibility shifted to Professor Jivko Draganov with the collaboration of Laurence Gormley, whom I wish to thank for all he has done over the years. We know that for the next edition we will not be able to count anymore on precious his support for this delicate task, and so we began exploring possible suitable referees for the assessment of the next round of thesis. This search will be finalised in the next months to be ready for 2020.

Finally, both in Warsaw and in Toulouse Professor Ziegler, Treasurer of the Association, informed the Board about the economic issues and about the budgetary aspects concerning the management of the Association.

It was agreed that the Association should make an extra effort to secure new memberships, and the President agreed to do all that was possible to enhance the opportunity to welcome new members in the Association and to facilitate their participation in the association.

Having said this, the financial condition of the Association, as the Treasurer reports, is healthy.

As we will see, this effort to approach candidate members was crowned with some success.

We owe to our Secretary, Prof. Milagros Orozco Hermoso, much work in this respect, and I wish to really thank her on behalf of the entire Board for all that she brilliantly did for the Association in the past year.

B) Activities relating to the mission of the Association.

ELFA sponsored summer programs run by Members of the Association

In the first year of application of the regulation for the promotion of the ELFA label for summer courses, I am pleased to report that three law schools have launched summer schools that have obtained the ELFA recognition. These are:

COMPANIES CROSSING BORDERS, organised by the Faculty of Law of the University of Antwerp, Belgium (Responsible person: Prof. Dr. Robby Houben)

CRITICAL TOPICS ON ENVIRONMENTAL LAW IN A COMPARATIVE, EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE, organised by the Faculty of Law of the university of Insubria at Como (responsible person, Prof. Barbara Pozzo)

EUROPEAN LAW - ONGOING CHALLENGES AND FUTURE PROSPECTS
Organisation: Organised by the University for Business and Technology – UBT, Kosovo (responsible person, Prof. Dr. Sc. Jorida Xhafaj)

I encourage all ELFA Members to consider the opportunity to submit an early application to ELFA to obtain such recognition for a summer school that has the requisites state in the relevant ELFA regulation. This is an excellent way to make our Association visible and to effectively contribute to its life. The new deadline to apply such recognition will soon be open, all the relevant information is available on our web site.

The European Jurist project

I wish to mention in this respect the effort carried out by Verónica Ruiz Abou-Nigm and José Maria de Dios Marcer to launch and to carry to fruition the project leading to an European Jurists Network.

This is an effort that should join a certain numbers of faculties that are committed to develop legal studies in the direction that the Association intends to promote. The project was started last year, under the Presidency of Prof. José María de Dios, with contacts that brought Prof. Sjef van Erp in the working team as a representative of the European Law Institute, who is a close partner of the association. The group that set to work met three times. Once in Paris, last September at the *Société de législation comparé*, a second time in Toulouse, as mentioned above, and now a third time, here in Torino.

The document that has been prepared in this respect, as a result of these meetings, reflects the discussion that took place as well at the panel organised during this Conference. It is a pilot project that may offer a source of inspiration to all those Faculties that in Europe intend to develop or renew their curricula with an eye to offering to a broader section of the students the opportunity to engage in European and transnational legal studies. I wish to thank all the colleagues who have taken part to the discussions involved in the development of this project, and in particular

Prof. Sylvaine Poillot-Peruzzetto, *Conseiller à la Cour de Cassation* and Mr. Maxime Antier as well as the colleagues of the École Nationale de la Magistrature who participated to our debates for their excellent contribution to the development of the project.

As President of the Association I think this is a most valuable project, one that follows on the essential mission of the association. For this reason I did all I could to support it and contribute to it, together with the Board, and I intend to continue to do so in the future.

The relationship with sister associations

The relationship with our sister associations is as strong as ever. I could not attend the 2018 Seals meeting in Boca Raton, but I now take the occasion to express our gratitude to our Colleagues from Seals that secure a regular attendance at our meetings. I wish to mention in particular Prof. Richard Meyer for his presentation of opportunities that are open to ELFA members under the collaboration agreement with SEALS, and to Prof. Russell Weaver and Prof. Patrick Hugg for their contribution to our panels.

In early January I attended the meeting of the American Association of Law Schools which took place in New Orleans. There I participated in one of their panels dedicated to European law. I was welcomed by Prof. Vicky Jackson, President of the Association, who is as well interested in maintaining strong ties with us, and by a large number of Colleagues, who take an interest in the activity of ELFA.

Prof. José Maria de Dios will be once more in Boca Raton at the forthcoming yearly SEALS meeting to represent ELFA, and to further develop the network of contacts he established with the launching of GLEAC. Since José Maria will cease to be part of the Board for its next meeting I wish to express on behalf of the Board members all our gratitude for the important work he realised while part of the Board, and as President of the association.

Expanding the membership of the Association;

The number of the Members of an Association is a sign of its vitality. Together with the members of the Board, with whom I worked in close collaboration, and that I wish to thank on this occasion, an effort was made to reach out for new members.

This effort was successful: we now have 14 new members, two old Members have renewed their membership (Lund University and the Free university of Brussels), and 10 more applications are pending for consideration.

I have therefore the pleasure to welcome the new members that have entered the Association:

1. American University, Washington (USA)
2. “Alliance of New Europe Universities” (formerly: Association of Private Universities) (GEORGIA)
3. Coventry University (UK)
4. David Aghmashenebeli University (GEORGIA)
5. Izmir University of Economics (TURKEY)
6. Maynooth University (IRELAND)
7. University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (ITALY)
8. Ternopil National University of Economics (UKRAINE)
9. Toulouse I – Capitole (FRANCE)
10. Universidad Católica de Uruguay Dámaso Antonio Larrañaga (URUGUAY)
11. Università di Firenze (ITALY)
12. University of City Island - North Cyprus (TURKEY)
13. University of Lincoln (UK)
14. University of Nicosia (CYPRUS)

Distinguished Members of the Association, ELFA is an important forum for all debates concerning legal education in Europe, and beyond.

I hope to have the opportunity to meet you all once more to the next Conference of the association that shall take place next year in Warsaw.

I trust that I absolved my tasks to the best of my capacities, with the assistance of all of you.

I consider a great honour to have served as President of the ELFA for the year 2018 - 2019, and in this spirit I submit this report for your approval.

(Prof. Michele Graziadei)