

25/04/2019

Szeged conference on Economy, law and sovereignty in the EU

The University of Szeged IRSI with the Europe Direct Szeged and the European Public Law Organization (EPLO) co-organized a conference on **"Economy, Law and Sovereignty in the EU - Coordinating Interests and Obligations of the Member States in the Global Economic Space"**.

The conference, took place on **April 25, 2019**, between **09:30** and **16:00** at University of Szeged, Attila József Education and Information Centre, Basement Lecture Hall (6722 Szeged, Ady tér 10.)

The Conference focused on the relationships between economy, European Union law and sovereignty, more precisely, the rights of the Member States to protect national economic interests. By receiving the most foreign direct investments, the European Union is named as one of the most open economies in the world. Beside others, China's investments in Europe have been rapidly raising year by year, and several Member States are concerned about this fact both because of the acquisition of companies operating in advanced technologies and the potential risks of acquisitions to public order and security. Several Member States urge EU lawmakers to legislate about foreign acquisitions, but meanwhile we are waiting for a sparkle. Chinese investments keep growing in areas also related to national security such as the energy sector, maritime and air transportation, seaports, strategic infrastructure or companies with high-tech know-how. Nowadays, we experience a shift from multilateral and global legal solutions (e.g. the WTO system) towards bilateral solutions such as bilateral investment treaties. The free movement of capital is one of the fundamental principles of the EU that seems to be unshakable and foreign investments are theoretically essential even for developed economies. At this Conference, we have looked for answers to the questions of what legal opportunities Member States have against foreign investments from third countries into the EU, and how they could protect their national economic interests, public order and national security. We examined the links between economic and legal trends in foreign investment and the Member States' opportunities to take action by considering national, international, and EU legal aspects.

Program

09:30-10:00 *Registration*

Moderator: Anikó Szalai, *Senior Lecturer, University of Szeged, Faculty of Law*

10:00-10:15 *Opening remarks*

László Trócsányi, *Minister of Justice, Professor of the University of Szeged*

Spyridon Flogaitis, *Director, European Public Law Organisation*

10:15-10:45 **Council regulation on establishing a framework for the screening of foreign direct investments into the Union and the case law of ECJ**

Zoltán Csehi, *Judge, Court of Justice of the European Union*

11:00-11:20 Between Compliance and Particularism – Member State Interests and European Union Law

Márton Varju, *Researcher, Hungarian Academy of Sciences*

11:20-11:40 Member State interests and EU external trade policy – Recent developments

Balázs Horváthy, *Researcher, Hungarian Academy of Sciences; Senior Lecturer, Széchenyi University Győr*

11:40-12:00 National Security and Economic Issues in EU Members

Jorge Bacelar Gouveia, *Professor, University NOVA of Lisbon*

12:00-12:30 Discussion

12:30-14:00 Lunch

Moderator: Martonyi János, *Professzor Emeritus, University of Szeged, Faculty of Law*

14:00-14:20 Trends in world trade since the 2008 global crisis

Beáta Farkas, *Professor, University of Szeged, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration*

14:20-14:40 Investment in the EU by third countries, with special regard to China

Yao-Ming Hsu, *Professor, National Chengchi University, Taiwan*

14:40-15:00 Sovereignty and bilateral investment treaties

Bálint Kovács, *Lecturer, Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Law School, Cluj-Napoca, Romania*

15:00-15:20 New guy in town: the European Union and international investment law **Csongor Nagy**, *Professor, University of Szeged*

15:20-15:45 Debate

15:45-16:00 Final remarks

János Martonyi, *Professor Emeritus, University of Szeged, Faculty of Law*

The event was held in Hungarian and English languages with interpretation.