

EDELNet eLibrary Vol. 1 | December 2015

What is the EDELNet?

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Erasmus+

Funded by the European Union

Widening the access to top quality higher education.



Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

in this first issue we'd like to inform you about the EDELNet project which is a result of the successful long-term cooperation of three distance learning universities and the new Summer School programmes for Bachelor and Master students. The FernUniversität in Hagen, the Open Universiteit and the UNED are firmly devoted to further the principle of equal opportunity by safeguarding equal access to top quality higher education to everyone, using a methodology based on the principles of modern distance learning focused on the needs of the student. In the next three years we will offer all students of the participating universities new (intensive) programmes and a number interesting academic activities to enhance the internationalisation of the study programmes.

We hope that this new newsletter will give you a good introduction into the EDELNet programme. EDELNet is the last step (by now) in a long way of collaboration between the three universities. Our first contact took place in a Conference organised in Maastricht by the UK Law Teachers Association. This association organized in 2004 a conference in the Netherlands (usually they meet in UK, but sometimes they come to the continental Europe). In this conference one of the topic for a workshop was "Law teaching in Distance learning". Four Universities were reporting their experience: the Open University UK, the FernUniversität in Hagen, the local Open Universiteit of the Netherlands and the UNED of Spain. After the conference session the Dean of OU, Prof Dr Huub Spoormans, organized an informal meeting in the Old Maastricht main square (Vrijhof) with the representatives of

the FernUniversität, Prof. Dr. Patrick Sensburg (now a member of the German parliament and in March 2004 research assistant at FernUniversität) and Prof. Dr. Pablo de Diego, Deputy to Dean in Faculty of Law of UNED in 2004. In this meeting we decided to start with a collaboration under the ERASMUS frame (if any). After several contacts in the Netherlands, Germany and Spain we applied together to the Erasmus authorities of Spain to organize an intensive programme (for a Summer School) of two weeks. The successful first session took place in July 2008 in Madrid after a careful preparation since October 2007. During the years 2008 until 2015 (8 editions) Summer Schools with 12 students and 4-5 lecturers from each university have been organized in several points of Europe (three in Madrid, two in Maastricht, one in Berlin, one in Cologne, one – 2015 – in Las Palmas, Canary Islands, Spain).

The experience has been grateful and the anecdotes, memories, time spent together are a huge and fruitful collection. Around 250 students, mostly Spaniards, Dutch and Germans with a couple of dozens of lecturers and professors have completed eight brilliant Summer Schools with comparative aspects of the law systems of the three countries as a main subject. Workshops, seminars, lectures and a very nice Moot Court have encouraged – every year – people and institutions. When the ERASMUS support in Spain and Germany had concluded, we imagined a new frame, more ambitious, with a main focus in the doctoral level, without disregarding the care of the graduate and postgraduate level. We prepared carefully an application for the new ERASMUS+ frame (especially FernUniversität as coordinating institution) and the DAAD in Bonn has provided very good help for the next three years. We have a lot of ideas and projects. One meeting for doctoral students has been organized in Madrid in December 2015 (more information in issue Nº 2) and we expect today eagerly the new Summer School session for 2016 (split in two sessions: one for postgraduates and another one for graduates of the three Universities).

For me it is an honor to write these lines and to be still in contact with the rest of the organizers, working together from the very beginning. New lecturers and new students will be coming in the next months. I wait for my own learning in the new activities: adult students of Distance universities are not

only students of Law. We, the lecturers, actually learn a lot of things from the students.

I pretend to be present in Berlin in Summer 2016. And of course we're looking forward to your application for the Summer School programs in 2016!

Best wishes,

Prof. Dr. Pablo de Diego

Deputy to Dean
Faculty of Law
UNED

EDELNet: The European Distance Education in Law Network

In 2014, after eight years of successful cooperation in the organization of international common teaching activities on the bachelor level, the FernUniversität in Hagen, the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED) and the Open Universiteit Nederland (OUNI) established a Strategic Partnership to further cultural exchange and best practices in the internationalisation of high quality education in law for all three Bologna cycles. The partners are three leading European distance learning universities firmly devoted to further the principle of equal opportunity by safeguarding equal access to top quality higher education to everyone, using a methodology based on the principles of modern distance learning focused on the needs of the student.

Developed within this framework, the EDELNet (European Distance Education in Law Network) project is planned to be the first building block in the implementation of an ambitious scientific and pedagogic concept of Blended Active Learning and student oriented teaching facilitating a personal learning path with an emphasis on interdisciplinarity and intercultural communication skills as a basis for a better understanding of each other's legal cultures and practices throughout Europe and beyond. The project has been recently awarded with European Union funding for the period 2015-2018 by the DAAD ERASMUS+ funding program for Strategic Partnerships (Call 2015).

The goals of this project address the current need in the European society for widening the access to top quality high-

er education through international academic cooperation, as identified in the 2011 EU Modernisation Agenda (COM (2011) 567 final). For this purpose, EDELNet is geared toward the modernization of teaching methods in law with an innovative combination of student-centred blended learning tools and concepts. This innovative combination also draws on intercultural communication and interdisciplinary processes for the production, learning and application of relevant inter-subjective knowledge in addition to the traditional contents of legal education. This will be implemented through an international and cross-cultural cooperation that is devised to broaden access to and participation in international and European education, especially for disadvantaged groups such as students with disabilities, economic, social or geographical obstacles, health problems or cultural differences. In order to achieve these goals the EDELNet project comprises the development and implementation of virtual and face-to-face teaching and training activities and courseware in key methodological and substantive areas of the law, including language competences, intercultural communication skills and interdisciplinary methods of knowledge production applied to legal practice and scholarship. The EDELNet project is based on the full commitment and support of the key academic and administrative units of the three partner universities, especially those working in the fields of quality management, IT and media, dissemination and knowledge transfer, and the central management units (Deans' and Rectors' offices).



In the long run, we hope for students from associated universities and other potential public and private institutions from all over Europe and beyond to participate in our program and benefit from the EDELNet project results. In line with these anticipations, we expect students and staff to: have a high quality international experience that will enrich their learning and professional paths; overcome language inhibitions by taking English as a common language; and cultivate their intercultural competences while operating in a cross-cultural environment. The project will also grant students easy access to an international network of professionals of the law, both academic and practitioners. All this will decisively improve our students' chances to get access to the international and European labor market and will bring forward our plans to merge different European teaching cultures, traditions and didactic formats to improve teaching practice in the entire European community of law teaching. Through affordable, relevant, high quality and internationalized higher distant learning education in the field of law, we expect to contribute to a sustainable and inclusive growth in the European Union.

Our Medium- and Long-term Goals

- Our medium-term goal is the development of projects that allow us to design and implement international common teaching & research activities that are sustainable in the long run. All these activities encapsulate our three transversal principles:

- Intercultural communication skills
- Student-oriented blended active learning
- High quality scientific production

- Our long-term goals are:
 - the establishment of Joint LL.M and Ph.D Programs;
 - the sustainability of our LL.B common teaching activities; and
 - the expansion of the Partnership to new Partners.

In order to achieve these goals the EDELNet project comprises the development and implementation of:

- virtual and face-to-face teaching activities:
 - Intensive Study Programmes;
 - Virtual Mobility Modules;
- staff training activities in:
 - Intercultural communication;
 - Student-oriented blended methods;
- courseware in:
 - key methodological and substantive areas of the law, including interdisciplinary methods of knowledge production applied to legal practice and scholarship;
 - language competences;
 - intercultural communication skills;
- vertical portal (VORTAL) of the project where the activities of the project will be hosted and disseminated.

Bachelor and Master Summer School in Law programmes in Berlin



The Summer School in Law programme of the FernUniversität (Germany), the Open Universiteit (Netherlands) and the UNED (Spain) which was first established in 2008 will be continued with a new concept in the next three years. In addition to the Bachelor programme Master students will also get their own Summer School intensive programme.

Bachelor Summer School

Students from distance teaching universities usually don't have the chance to complete an exchange semester in a foreign country. On the other hand intercultural experiences and language skills are becoming more and more important

in today's economy. The main objective for the Bachelor Summer School, which will take place in **Berlin from July 10th to July 16th 2016**, aims at students abilities to communicate with lawyers from other countries on legal questions. Students will get the the chance to discuss current legal and political issues and to work on several case studies in international student teams. The central pedagogy of the programme is blended learning. The Summer School will consists of face-to-face meetings during one week in Berlin and distant teaching elements to prepare the participants for the meetings and discussions. Students will need to use Legal English vocabulary and expressions, therefore all participants will receive a language training to enhance their lan-

guage skills to enable them to communicate more effectively with foreign peers and colleagues. This training will be provided by an E-course and will start in April 2016.

Another important aspect of the Summer School is that students from different countries get the chance to live and work together for a period of two weeks in an international environment. The intensive programme in Berlin 2016 will be organized by the FernUniversität.

Master Summer School

A new programme designed for Master students will also take place in Berlin from **from July 3rd to July 9th 2016**. The subject-matter of the first Master intensive program will be a combination of private international law and international commercial law. The face-to-face program in Berlin will be preceded by a virtual preparatory phase. The intensive program in Berlin will start with an introduction to Legal English. A flexible combination of lectures, seminar sessions and consultations will be offered in the first days of the programme. Team work sessions and consultation hours for a Moot Court, which will take place at the last day of the Summer School, will complete the program.

Costs and Accommodation

The Summer Schools are funded by the ERASMUS+ programme of the European Union, students of the participating universities benefit from this financial support. The costs of the accommodation for both programs vary accordingly to the chosen rooms. For both programs students can choose bet-

ween double-bedrooms (160 Euro incl. breakfast and tuition fee for the 6 days) and single-bedrooms (160 Euro incl. breakfast and tuition fee for the 6 days). Additionally travel costs up to 275 EUR will also be covered by the funding.

Application and Academic recognition

If you're interested in the European Summer School programmes don't hesitate to contact us via e-mail for more information about the application at your University and the academic recognition.

FernUniversität in Hagen

Summer School programs Bachelor and Master:

Martin von Hadel

martin.vonhadel@fernuni-hagen.de

Open Universiteit

Summer School program Bachelor:

Prof. dr. Huub Spoormans

huub.spoormans@ou.nl

Summer School program Master:

Donald Hellegers

donald.hellegers@ou.nl

UNED

Summer School program Bachelor:

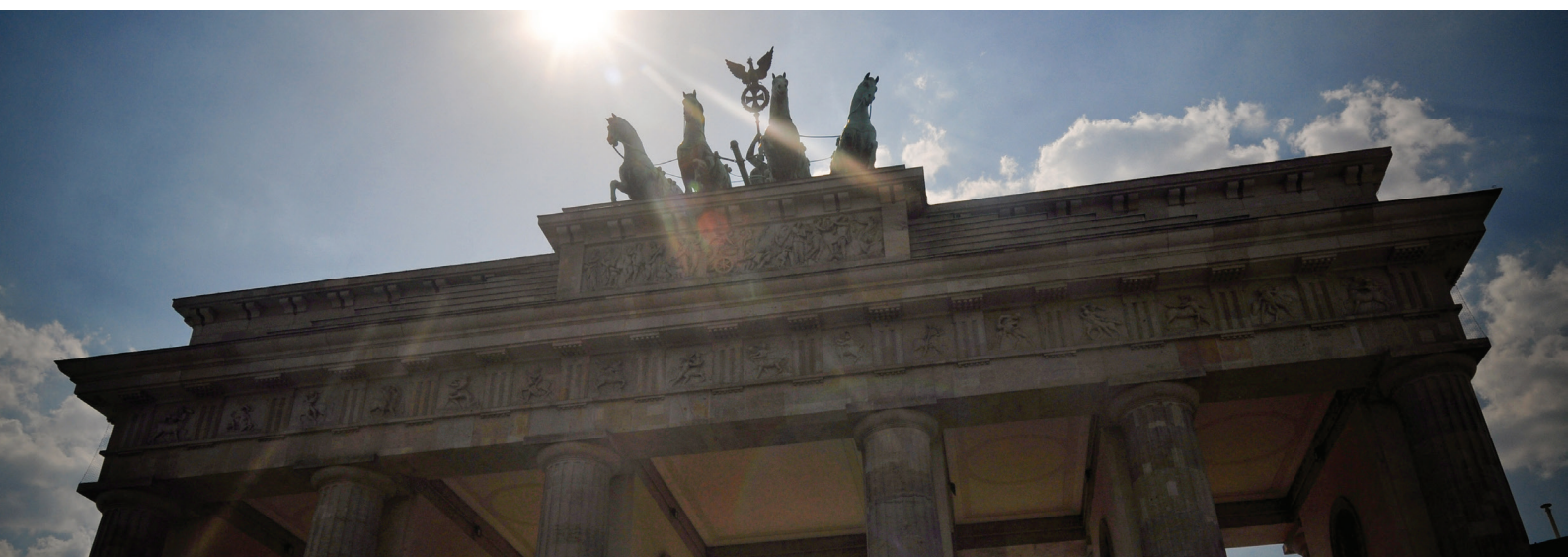
Prof. Dr. Pablo de Diego Ángeles

pdiego@der.uned.es

Summer School program Master:

Prof. Dr. Eva María Domínguez Pérez

emdominguez@der.uned.es



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Dean's office of the Faculty of Law of UNED

Prof. Dr. Pablo de Diego Ángeles (Editor-in-chief)

Facultad de Derecho UNED

pdiego@der.uned.es

Obispo Trejo s/n 28040.Madrid. (Spain)