

Une bibliothèque à l'honneur

MPI Bibliothek

From zero to a fully-fledged law library

The library of the new Max Planck Institute Luxembourg for Procedural Law

You may have seen this beautiful white and gray building in Kirchberg, Luxembourg, a reminiscence of a fortress to be surrounded by water. It has been designed by world famous architect Richard Meier. His buildings, usually in white, are made to host a lot of light and inspiration. If you have visited the Getty museum in Los Angeles, or the Municipal Hall and Library in The Hague, perhaps you witnessed that feeling.



Back in 2012 the last two floors of the building had nothing more than space and light. Still, they were to host the new Max Planck Institute (MPI) Luxembourg for International, European and Regulatory Procedural Law. The Institute was officially inaugurated on 8 May 2013 in the presence of the Grand Duke of Luxembourg.

Prof. Dr. Dres. h.c. Burkhard Hess became founding and executive director of the Max Planck Institute Luxembourg in September 2012, thus also establishing the Department of European and Comparative Procedural Law at the Institute. Prior to that prof. Hess held chairs at the Universities of Tübingen and Heidelberg. He has multiple awards for his overall activity and publications, including the award Doctor Honoris Causa, granted recently by the University of Thessaloniki and the University of Ghent.

Prof. Dr. Hélène Ruiz Fabri became Director of the Max Planck Institute Luxembourg in 2014 and established its Department of International Law and Dispute Resolution. Before becoming Director of the MPI, prof. Ruiz Fabri was professor at the Sorbonne Law School (University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne) of which she has been Dean for four years. She has published extensively in the fields of WTO law and international dispute resolution and has recently been awarded the silver medal from the French 'Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique'.

Procedural law matters – this could be the leitmotif for the MPI Luxembourg. With the MPI Luxembourg being the first Max Planck Institute on legal matters outside German borders, its location is ideal for an Institute focusing on procedural law: Luxembourg is indeed the synonym for the constant development and expansion of the legal systems of the EU Member States by means of European law and of the jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Union.



The family of MPI library (and friends) visiting the Family of Man exhibition, 2016

A major advantage of the Institute is that it brings together different fields of law, on the national, as well as on the international level. Thus, the research profile of the Institute overcomes the separation of public law and private law which is characteristic of Continental law. Additionally, criminal law aspects (especially in international and European law) are included in its research profile. This approach embeds the Institute in a truly international setting and opens new perspectives for procedural law. At the same time, the Institute does not limit its area of interest to “procedural law as such”. Rather, dispute settlement is always to be seen in the context of the fields of law to which it relates. The Institute attracts many visiting scholars and guests and provides all necessary amenities for their research, including unlimited access to the library.

Being the heart of the Institute, the new MPI Library has been established in the fall of 2012. Its primary mission is to assist academic law research of the MPI researchers by providing quality information with modern technical means. This objective is being secured through continuous building of a comprehensive collection of books, periodicals, databases and other library materials covering mainly European, comparative and regulatory civil procedural law and dispute resolution in public international law.

The acquisition policy of the Institute aims at acquiring up to 10.000 publications per year and relies on the expertise and recommendations of the research fellows. The task of the librarians is to select the best 10,000 titles published all over the world within the research scope of the Institute. For less than four years the Library now shelves over 40,000 volumes of books and journals in 27 languages. It currently subscribes to 95 journals in print, while several thousands are accessible online.

The first three years of the Library witnessed the need to acquire predominantly print materials published from the year 2000 onwards, as well as, to a lesser extent, books

from the 20th, 19th and even 18th centuries. The purpose of acquiring publications retrospectively was to establish a core collection in procedural law, international law and dispute resolution, to be the basis for embracing more recent publications and to present the evolution of legal theory and practice.

In support of its mission the Library manages and enables access to 40 law databases online in addition to over 24.000 electronic journals and 200 eBooks, searchable in a single A-Z list catalogue via the Library's eResources Portal.

The library collection has been also enriched by significant donations of personal libraries. The collections of late Prof. Giuseppe Tarzia and Prof. Adriano De Cupis cover the fields of Italian and European procedural law and count more than 8.000 volumes.

A new, tailor-made library classification system has been developed by the Institute's researchers. And has been further registered at the Library of Congress. The entire collection is available on open access shelving, so that the user can browse it following the classification. The Library's Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) contains the bibliographic records of all monographs and serials held by the Library.



Ms. Juja Chakarova is the founding head librarian, who in 2012 undertook the responsibility to create the Library from scratch. She previously created the Library of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon also from scratch, and served as librarian at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

The Library is accessible to the Institute's members and research guests at any time, 24/7. The researchers can borrow library materials to their offices using modern RFID self-check terminals. External users are welcome on weekdays from 9:00 to 18:00.

Through the close cooperation with peer libraries, networks and professional associations the Library provides highly appreciated interlibrary loan service. Some of the most important partners are the European Commission Central Library, other Max Planck law institutes, the Peace Palace Library, the National Library of Luxembourg, and the Library of the Court of Justice of the EU. The support of these partner libraries was crucial during the first years of the MPI, when the resources of the MPI Library were very limited.

The MPI Library finds the cooperation between libraries in Luxembourg very important. It is only through sharing, exchange of



MPI librarians and student assistants at the Institute 'spiral of knowledge' stairs, 2015

best practices and ideas, that libraries can develop further and better serve their constituencies. In 2016 the MPI Library joined the Luxembourg Consortium and is also ALBAD's newest member.

The team currently has 12 librarians, coming from 9 countries, or 'jurisdictions'. Apart from their rich library experience, they bring language expertise and, of course, a precious flavor of different cultures. Students from the universities of Heidelberg, Luxembourg, Trier and Saarbrücken assist the Library and the research activities. Researchers and guests of the Institute gladly assist the librarians with their suggestions and contribute to the selection process of books and other resources. The multicultural environment within the Library and the Institute

in general, is of real benefit for the multi-perspective, multi-discipline approach to different research and library topics.

At the end of its third year in 2015, the Library has successfully developed its core collection and implemented the most important services for its customers. It could be called 'fully fledged' to the extent that it was able to serve in a sufficient way its users. However, this term is an approximation, as no library can today meet the users' requests of tomorrow. The exponential developments in communications and IT open a new range of possibilities for all. More and more information is disseminated; the information reaches its audience instantly, while networking builds communities. Researchers' habits and needs are changing, as it becomes possible to have any piece of information at your fingertips. Open source publications are common practice. The changing landscape of information as regards its abundance and accessibility creates an interesting challenge to modern research libraries. To successfully deal with this

challenge, the MPI Library is committed to constantly adjusting to its constituency's expectations and to implementing world best practices.



To respond to the constantly changing environment in a way that improves the user experience, the Library launched in 2016 **LIKE** – a Lab for Innovation, Knowledge and Exchange. **LIKE** is an informal meeting place for librarians, library users, IT and technology specialists, to share, discuss and implement innovative practices concerning libraries, knowledge and information management. **LIKE** has an incubator of ideas, that go through extensive research phase, and when they mature enough, they are shared, discussed, tested and implemented. **LIKE** is also a forum to share impressions from conferences, library visits, web courses, workshops and acquired knowledge. In order to follow the best practices, the Library will invite leading librarians, information managers and innovative companies in different fields to share skills, experiences, and products. One of the current research topics of LIKE is 'RFID based inventory robots in libraries'. LIKE is conducting tests of different products and will share its findings with other Luxembourgish libraries, interested in the project, at a conference in October.

On 27-28 October 2016 the MPI Library will host an international Conference 'Innovation in Libraries'. This forum is also the traditional Herbsttagung of the Max Planck Institutes libraries in social sciences. As this is the first conference for the new MPI Library, all partnering libraries from Luxembourg are heartily invited to attend. The programme will be announced on the 5th of October.

New in the landscape of Luxembourg, but having a rich experience already, the MPI Library is delighted to become a new member of ALBAD and believes that the membership will enhance partnership and cooperation with other libraries in Luxembourg and the neighbouring countries.

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