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South East European Law School ^{Network}

Promotional Document – Strengthening the EU Legal Studies in the SE Europe project

In this short document we have comprised briefly the concept of the project “Strengthening the EU Legal Studies in SEE” and provided the general overview of its basic components and planned activities. The main goals of the project are provided in the first section while the second section of the document contains brief overview of the major activities which are to take place in the projects life cycle.

1. Goals and Aims of the Project

Key Goal - The project aims to advance and promote the exchange of knowledge and views on the development of the legal systems in South Eastern Europe (SEE) in accordance with EU law. The project will reinforce the structures for the development and promotion of the SEE Law Journal (SEE LJ), which is a statutory activity of the South East European Law School Network (SEELS). It stimulates EU law research and explores relevant national legal issues in an effort to provide deeper insight in the legislative requirements for the current legal developments both in EU and the region.

Background of the SEE LJ – The SEE LJ is a unique publication representing the only scientific English language journal in the SEE region that deals with relevant EU law issues and an encouraging example of intraregional academic collaboration. It publishes high-quality original, double peer-reviewed scientific articles that have a multidisciplinary approach and are focusing on relevant questions of regional, European and international integration of the Western Balkan states, issues of legal reform and approximation with the *acquis communautaire*, best practices in legal reform and the approximation of the national legislations in SEE with the EU law. It has proven to be a publication that raised special interest among the young academics in the region. The process of publication of the SEE LJ is managed by the staff of the Centre for SEELS and the editorial board members who together ensemble the key personnel tasked with the activities proposed in this project application. So far 3 issues of the SEE LJ have been published.

Objectives and activities – Two major objectives are envisaged within this project. On one hand the establishment of the web platform and the publication of the SEE LJ that will provide for a forum for exchange of scientific and practical views on the developments of EU law the legal systems of the South East European (SEE) region. We expect that the proposed measures will motivate and support the research efforts of the individual researchers in the SEELS network and the region. Second is conducting of the communication and dissemination activities the SEE LJ will be promoted at the relevant EU based research institutions and higher education institutions, increasing the visibility of the researchers of EU law and Institutions in the Western Balkans. This will also provide a knowledge base for the policy makers, especially but not limited to the SEE region as well as a platform for multidisciplinary exchange and debate between academia and practitioners.

Expected results - The project is conceived in such manner that it provides several clearly measurable outputs. A multi-functional web platform will be set up to allow easy access to information about current EU Law developments (SEE LJ’s content and collections of relevant data on EU Law and institutions). It will also serve as tool for automatization of the production of the SEE LJ.

The process will be supported by the editorial Board meetings.

Adequate training will be provided for the participants in the process via webinars and manuals which will be prepared and conducted in the project life time.

In the life cycle of the project it is foreseen to publish four (4) editions of the SEE LJ and to organise EU Law studies promotional events in all members of the SEELS.

We expect that the project will strengthen the capacities of the network as key competence centre for EU Law studies in the region as well the faculties' capacity for EU legal studies. It will increase the visibility of SEELS and fosters the SEE LJ to become the main vehicle for the promotion of EU law affairs in South East Europe.

Expected sustainable result of the project: The project will position the SEE LJ and its website as a relevant source for EU law issues, create a network of excellence on EU and SEE law related topics and will generally increase the capacities for EU legal research in the region.

2. Concept of the project

Implementation activities:

- A project kick-off meeting of the **Editorial Board** was held in which the Editorial Policy of the SEE LJ was revised, and based on the previous experiences and planned activities, it was amended accordingly.
- At the moment the second step of creation of a **virtual platform** for the SEE LJ which will a) provide access to the articles and data collections and b) automate the publishing process of the journal is underway and we expect the web platform to be placed online later this summer.
- **Webinars** will be organised to train the editorial board members and reviewers on using the system once the website is fully functional.
- **Manuals** for the different categories of users (editorial board members, reviewers, authors) will be prepared and made available once the website is functional and placed online.
- Once this phase is completed the **call for papers** will be placed online and the process of the publication of four editions (biannually) of the SEE LJ will be initiated. The SEE LJ new editions will be published in 2018.
- Following the completion of the production of the first edition the **Second Editorial Board Meeting** will be held to assess and refine the established mechanisms and processes and to develop sustainability plan.
- In order to promote EU law studies and the journal **EU Law Days** will be held at the faculties targeting teaching staff, students, legal professionals, EU delegations and civil society representatives.

Format and structure of the SEE LJ:

The SEE LJ will be published in online version and printed version. The online edition will be accessible via the web site. The printed version will be published in a limited number of copies for promotional purposes. The SEE LJ will be made available for free download on the website "seelawjournal.org". It will be consisted of academic section containing peer reviewed scientific papers, and the practical section containing current topics and issues provided by the relevant legal practitioners.

The web site will be constructed in such manner to serve as the hub for the academic staff which wishes to contribute with their scientific papers creating the so called restricted area of the web page, which will be automatizing the overall production of the SEE LJ. It will also contain the so called news section which will be the area of the webpage that is open to the general public, containing a comprehensive collections of data (legislations, comments, statute books, reports, etc.), a list of relevant institutions and actors, and a section that provides space for current debates and developments, developing in such manner into a central knowledge hub for EU law in South Eastern Europe

The links of SEE LJ editions will be placed on the websites of SEELS and its member faculties. The Facebook Page of SEELS will be used to share news, developments and abstracts of articles to be published, also providing a platform for discussion and exchange of opinions. In addition, SEELS will use its numerous ongoing activities such as conferences, seminars and workshops as a platform for the promotion of the journal on a continuous basis.

Around 500 hard copies will be printed (deliverable nr.3) per edition for dissemination and promotional purposes as well as for the collections of the libraries of the SEELS member faculties, professional public and private associations.

Newsletters - following each publication of the journal entailing information on the content of the journal as well as the other activities of the Network will be disseminated. All member faculties will forward the newsletter to students and teaching staff, reaching roughly about **30.000 recipients** dedicated to the study and research of legal affairs in South Eastern Europe. National bar chambers, chambers of notaries and enforcement agents as well as academies of judges and public prosecutors in the SEE region will be approached to share the newsletter with their staff and members as well.

Promotional events - at each member faculty through the organisation of **over 20 'EU Law Days'** the visibility of SEELS at the academia and wider legal community will be supported and the researchers and students will be encourage to dedicate their academic interest towards EU law. Through approaching a wide audience including policy makers as well as legal practitioners the 'EU Law Days' will open a **multidisciplinary discourse** on current aspects of EU Law in South Eastern Europe that will strengthen the network as a whole.