
Editorial and Preface to the Legal Research Network – Autonomy Papers

In September 2019, the Faculty of Law of ELTE Budapest hosted the Annual Conference of the Legal Research Network (LRN). This cooperation was initially founded in 2006 by the Faculties of Law of the Universities of Groningen, Turku and Uppsala: the Universities of Bristol, Budapest (ELTE), Ghent, Göttingen and Lille-Nord de France have since joined the network. Thematically, the LRN is a general network, which aims at improving the international profile of its members, strengthening thematic research cooperation between its staff, and promoting the international scientific perspectives of its young researchers. The most important event of the Network is its Annual Conference, which is held at one of the member universities around specific themes that can be approached from different fields of legal research. These conferences are organized year after year on the basis of an annual rotation system. Therefore, after the first opportunity in 2012, the Annual Conference of the LRN was again hosted in September 2019 by the Faculty of Law of ELTE University Budapest. It offered a common space for both senior and junior scholars to present and discuss their research in a stimulating international environment, which transcended the traditional boundaries of legal sub-disciplines. The conference was also dedicated to fostering the progress of PhD students, by senior academic staff actively taking part in the discussions following the presentations.

The conference theme for the Annual Conference in 2019 was autonomy, which is a basic principle and indispensable value of modern society, as well as of each and every legal system. Across all fields of law, the concept of autonomy has its special implications. Law protects the autonomy of individuals and associations by defending the boundaries of their own self-rule. Autonomy has not only to be assured and protected, but its content has to be defined and its limits set. Autonomy cannot be absolute and should not lead to the detriment of other values. Complex questions therefore arise, which may be addressed from different angles and on different levels: autonomy is certainly a theme that is approachable through various fields of legal research.

The conference had a very rich 3-day programme, covering a great number of disciplines, from criminal law to labour law and across civil procedure and constitutional law, just to name a few. In the present edition of the *ELTE Law Journal*, you can find a selection of the themes of the conference, which already represent this wide range of subjects. Besides the main theme of autonomy, the methods of comparative law also link the articles. Their richness of thought clearly shows that the concept of the LRN is valid and viable. As a member of the Legal Research Network, we see these articles, representative of the conference contributions, as

strong evidence that this cooperation is an essential and predominantly beneficial mechanism. Together with Dean Prof. Pál Sonnevend, chair, and Dr. Éva Gellérné Lukács, member of the organising committee, we express our hope that, despite the pandemic we will be able to meet soon at the next similarly fruitful annual conference.

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