

NEWSLETTER

CONFERENCE "Truth, Transitional Justice & Reconciliation" in Albania

On September 12th, 2022 the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences in cooperation with the European Wasatia Graduate School on Peace & Conflict Resolution and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Tirana, organized the conference on "Truth, Transitional Justice & Reconciliation in Albania". This event aimed to discuss political peace in the country from its capability to expose the truth of the past regime, offer mechanisms of justice to the victims and finally enable societal peace by means of reconciliation.

The conference brought together in a public panel recognized personalities who shared their professional perspectives and experiences on the topic. The panel chaired and moderated by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lisen Bashkurti, Dean of the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences, EPOKA University included Ms. Flutura Ağa, member of the Albanian Parliament; Mr. Simon Miraka, the General Director of the Institute for the Integration of Former Political Victims(2002-2013); Mr. Bekim Blakaj, Executive Director of the Humanitarian Law Center in Kosovo and Ms. Admirina Peci, journalist.

Mrs. Acka spoke on how the political elites in Albania through the years have infringed the truth which is necessary for the transition. Mr. Miraka offered his personal experience as a prosecuted individual during the dictatorship period in Albania. Mr. Blakaj, on the other hand, centered his talk on the need to get recognized as a precondition for justice. Finally, the last panelist Ms. Peci explained that there had been little to no media coverage on the process of transition in Albania for a long period of time and this position had been slightly changing in the last five years.

"There can be no JUSTICE without TRUTH and there can be no RECONCILIATION without JUSTICE."



Roundtable Discussion: The Future of Cooperative Security in the Western Balkans from the public opinion perspective



On November 9th, 2022, the Department of Political Science and International Relations at EPOKA University held a round table discussion titled "The Future of Cooperative Security in the Western Balkans from the public opinion perspective" with representatives from the Center for the Study of Democracy and Governance (CSDG), with the support of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung or Friedrich Ebert Foundation contributed to the establishment of the Albanian Security Barometer. The seminar was moderated by Dr. Reina Shehi, Head of Department of Political Science and IR. The discussion started with the welcoming remarks by Assoc. Prof. Dr. David Felsen, Vice-Rector, Epoka University; Dr. Jubjana Vila, Head of Center for European Studies; Dr. Niuton Mulleti, Head of Law Department; and Nino Strati, Project Coordinator of the Centre for the Study of Democracy and Governance. The Presentation of the issues, policies and documents were elaborated and presented by the Security Policy Expert Dr. Mentor Beqa.

In this context, within the framework of the implementation of the Security Barometer 2022 project, the Centre for the Study of Democracy and Governance prepared the policy document "The Future is Cooperative!? Perceptions and Reality from the Western Balkans". The Albanian Security Barometer now in its 4th edition was published in 2022, with the intention of assessing or analyzing any potential security risks or threats that can affect or detrimentally impact the state of Albania. In this barometer it incorporates also how the various occurrences on the international arena within the context of Western Balkans, shape or influence the views of Albanians on security and protection.

<https://www.epoka.edu.al/news-roundtable-discussion-the-future-of-cooperative-security-in-the-western-balkans-from-the-public-opinion-perspective-6158.html>

"Western Balkans Regional Cooperation-Perspective from Albania"

On Nov. 17, 2022, our Bachelor and Master students had an open discussion on "Western Balkans Regional Cooperation - Perspective from Albania" with Mr. Klajdi Kaziu, president of UNYAA.

Considering the last development on the area, the discussion circled on the role of Albania in the Open Balkans initiative, its possible consequences- whether it can bring peace to the region and the comparison between this attempt for cooperation and that of the Berlin Process.

Workshop "On the Protection of Human Rights" with the Albanian Helsinki Committee



On November 17th 2022, students from Epoka University participated in a brainstorming workshop organized by the Albanian Helsinki Committee, which aimed at creating and strengthening cooperation bridges between citizens for discussing the topic of Human Rights. Participants varied from NGO representatives, activists and a limited number of students from Epoka University.

In the workshop, the Committee presented the initiation of the project 'On Protecting Human Rights in Albania'. As the Committee has a long experience as a watchdog in the implementation of policies for the improvement of the conditions of democracy in Albania, the workshop focused on training the participants on the methodology followed in case of creating monitoring reports. Students discussed on problems the Albanian state is facing regarding the protection of human rights. Then, they had the possibility to propose ideas in order to improve the instruments through which the state executes such protection, from gathering data to drafting a report.

Moreover, the participants discussed on the importance of the Albanian Constitution and the Constitutional Court, and the Committee gave details on steps to be followed in case of violation of human rights. As such, participants were not only informed on how to analyze, explain and monitor the implementation of the protection of human rights, but also on how mechanisms in Albania work regarding this topic.

The next workshop, which will be organized in 2024, will continue said mission on drafting a monitoring report on human rights.



Call for application for the Erasmus+ Exchange Program

The International Relations Office informed all the students interested to apply for the exchange programs during the SPRING 2022-2023 Academic Year. Based on the current academic offer the students of Political Science and International Relations are strongly encouraged to participate in the following universities: University of Oradea in Romania, Hochschule Fulda, University of Applied Sciences in Germany, Université Catholique de Lille in France, and University of Tartu in Estonia.



CAREER PATH SERIES

Through the Career Path Series, students are offered the opportunity to discuss on job possibilities as well as advice from successful graduates of Epoka University, and not only. They are offered insights regarding their fields of interest, internship, traineeship and job opportunities in Albania and abroad. Scholarships and different graduate studies' universities are also discussed.

Discussion with Mr. Derand Krasniqi

On November 11th, the department of Political Science and International Relations at Epoka University held a discussion with Mr. Derand Krasniqi and third year Bachelor's students. Mr. Krasniqi holds a very extensive resume, with notable works in both governmental and non-governmental organizations, currently serving as a Protection Associate at UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency. Mr. Krasniqi offered his insights, motivating students to not lose focus on the field as everything would gradually come at them. He gave words of hope and strength to students, in whichever field they preferred. He encouraged them to work consistently and to make use of their hobbies in their everyday life, as himself, who found motivation in his hobby for sports. Eventually, the discussion concluded with remarkable words from Mr. Krasniqi – to always keep going, no matter what.

<https://pir.epoka.edu.al/news-discussion-with-mr-derand-krasniqi-protection-associate-at-unhcr-the-un-refugee-agency-6162.html>

Call for applications from the College of Europe

On November 14th, 2022, the department of Political Science and International Relations organized a discussion with Communications and Recruitment officer and Ms. Ogerta Lala from the College of Europe. The College of Europe remains the oldest postgraduate institute of European Studies, with two main campuses in Belgium and Poland. Graduates from all European states can study European Affairs and thus help in further promoting European Union relations and Integration. This year, the College has started its admission's process for the year 2023-2024. Students are offered the possibility of following a MA in European Interdisciplinary Studies, MA in Transatlantic Affairs, MSc in European Economic Affairs, MA in EU International Relations and Diplomacy studies, etc.

<https://www.coleurope.eu/>

Discussion with Mr. Arbër Salihu and Mr. Besart Bucinca

On December 2nd, 2022, the department of Political Science and International Relations organized a discussion with Mr. Arbër Salihu and Mr. Besart Bucinca, both graduated at Epoka University in 2014. Mr. Salihu is currently an Administrator at Comodita Home Albania, while Mr. Bucinca is a site inspector at Novus Energy Kosovo. Both hosts stumbled upon the importance of practicality when choosing different internships and jobs, but always seeking for more. As both of them come from different backgrounds from their actual studies, they gave students a real life example on how to approach career plans and goals with a much lighter but also determined mindset. Also, hosts addressed the importance of having connections and networks as big pushers towards success.

<https://pir.epoka.edu.al/news-career-path-series-open-discussion-with-mr-arber-salihu-and-mr-besart-bucinca-6174.html>



Awareness Seminar: Albania and its unique path towards the European Union



On November 24, 2022, the Department of Political Science and International Relations held an Awareness Seminar on the topic "Albania and its unique path toward EU". The event was organized in the framework of the Jean Monnet Module Project "Neighborhood Enlargement and Regionalism in Europe" (NearEU) led by the University of Tartu.

In order to introduce the topic with the audience, Dr. Stefano Braghiroli, Associate professor of European Studies, and Ms. Anna Beitane, project coordinator, gave a brief introduction. Dr. Braghiroli focused mainly how the project began, its main aims, and the partner universities whereas Ms. Beitane concentrated on the outputs of NearEU mentioning the online courses offered from Tartu and a Graduate Conference in spring.



Following the presentation from the partners, Dr. Reina Shehu, head of the Department of Political Science and International Relations, gave the floor to the main guest speaker, Ms. Ilda Zhulali, Advisor for European Integration, to speak on the process of Albania integration. Ms. Zhulali began her discourse by explaining that the EU accession is a process that reflects Transformation and in regards to Albania, this transformation began in 1992 and is still ongoing. Ms. Zhulali further mentioned the agreements that Albania signed during the course of the three decades since 1992. Ms. Zhulali concluded by stating that due to the current geopolitical situation there is a change in enlargement methodology contributing to the uniqueness of this path.

8th International Conference on European Studies (ICES'22)

“Developments and Challenges in the European Integration Process: The Role of Identity and Intercultural Communication in a Transnational Perspective”

On September 21-23, 2022, the 8th International Conference on European Studies (ICES'22) “Developments and Challenges in the European Integration Process: The Role of Identity and Intercultural Communication in a Transnational Perspective” was organized by the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences and the Center for European Studies at EPOKA University in cooperation with the Faculty of History, International Relations, Political Science and Communication Science at University of Oradea.

The conference was held in hybrid (physical and virtual) and bilingual (English and French) format. It aimed to identify and analyze the process of European integration and the level of different forms of cooperation between regions, ethnic and confessional groups in contemporary societies with a particular focus on Western Balkan countries.

ICES'22 started with the welcoming remarks from Dr. Jubjana Vila, Head of the Center for European Studies and Conference Chair, EPOKA University; Assoc. Prof. Dr. David Felsen, Vice Rector for International Relations, EPOKA University; Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lisen Bashkurti, Dean of Faculty of Law and Social Sciences, EPOKA University; Prof. Dr. Gabriel Moisa, Dean of the Faculty of History, International Relations, Political Science and Communication Science, University of Oradea; Prof. Dr. Mircea Brie, University of Oradea; Dr. István Polgár, University of Oradea.

Epoka University and the Faculty of Law and Social Science would like to thank the representatives of the University of Oradea for co-organizing ICES'22 and all the conference participants for their valuable inputs, time, and dedication to the conference!

