

BALEX expands its activities

Some time has passed since the last newsletter of Baltic Area Legal Studies BALEX was published. Due to the absence of a coordinator during the first half of 2016, BALEX's activities have centered on the existing research projects. However, thanks to a successful fund-raising campaign in the spring resulting in financing from several collaborators, BALEX was able to recruit a coordinator in the autumn and now seeks to extend its functions to cover legal education and public events. BALEX is grateful to sponsors: the City of Turku, the Regional Council of Southwest Finland, the Åbo Akademi University Foundation, the Turku University Foundation and Åbo Akademi University.

Information about BALEX activities can now be found even on Twitter, www.twitter.com/BALEXStudies, and on www.balex.fi.

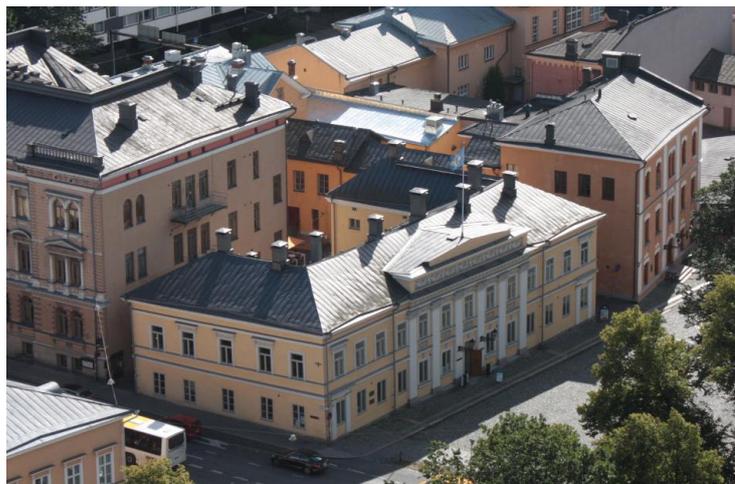
NEW COORDINATOR AND COOPERATION WITH CENTRUM BALTICUM

LL.M. Saara Ilvessalo took up office as coordinator for BALEX in mid-September. Ilvessalo is a Bachelor of Laws from Åbo Akademi University and a Master of Laws from University of Turku. She has started coordinating the work of BALEX and will help in planning the future projects, assignments and education; manage the cooperation with authorities, business life and civil society; handle the public relations, communication and fund-raising; and participate in the work of the Advisory Board and Steering Group of BALEX.

When recruiting the new coordinator, BALEX started a close cooperation with Centrum Balticum, an independent body between research and decision-making located in



Turku. The center is also a catalyst for public debate and a forum, which aims at strengthening the influence and voice of the Baltic Sea Region in Europe. BALEX will operate under the umbrella of Centrum Balticum and BALEX's existing and future employees are accommodated at Centrum



Balticum's premises in the Baltic Sea House in central Turku. BALEX will also cooperate closely with other Baltic Sea Region instances working in the same building, such as the Union of the Baltic Cities, the Baltic Region Healthy Cities Association and the Protection Fund for the Archipelago Sea.

The composition of the BALEX Advisory Board and Steering Group have also changed. The current members of the **Advisory Board** are:

- **Allan Rosas** (Chair), Judge at the European Court of Justice; Senior Fellow of the University of Turku and Visiting Professor, College of Europe and University of Helsinki
- **Kari Häkämies**, Region Mayor, Regional Council of Southwest Finland
- **Marie Jacobsson**, Principal Legal Adviser on International Law, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs
- **Anita Mäkinen**, Chief Adviser, Finnish Transport Safety Agency
- **Jussi Mälkiä**, President, Meriaura Group
- **Erja Tikka**, Ambassador for Baltic Sea Issues, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
- **Adam Wisniewski**, Professor, Gdansk University

The **Steering Group** consists of the following members:

- **Jussi Tapani** (Co-chair), Professor, Dean, University of Turku
- **Markku Suksi** (Co-chair), Professor, Åbo Akademi University
- **Felix Collin**, Project Researcher, University of Turku

- **Marko Joas**, Professor, Åbo Akademi University
- **Anne Kumpula**, Professor, University of Turku

PAST AND UPCOMING EVENTS

BALEX, through Henrik Ringbom, participated in a number of activities during the European Maritime Day on 18-19 May in Turku, including a workshop on marine spatial planning and a presentation at NaviGate on unmanned ships. Moreover both AAWA and CompMon projects (see more below) had separate stands at the event.

The network was also present in the Turku Book Fair on 30 September, where the Chair for BALEX Advisory Board Allan Rosas and BALEX coordinator Saara Ilvessalo were presenting the network's activity and available for interviews by the media. An interview was given to a radio channel of the Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE and at least one newspaper wrote about BALEX due to the press release that was sent before the event (in Finnish, see <http://www.aamuset.fi/naista-puhutaan/uutiset/saara-ilvessalo-johtamaan-oikeusoppineiden-verkoston>).

In November, BALEX will participate and present its activity in Blue skills - Knowledge of the Seas Network meeting in Rostock, Germany. The event will be held from 16.11.2016 to 17.11.2016 and BALEX has been asked to give a general presentation of its activities and ambitions. Saara Ilvessalo will represent the network in Rostock. The event will look at the theme of Blue skills from different perspectives and BALEX will provide one of the thematic stakeholders' and experts' perspective. The target group of the event are on one hand Interreg Programmes with a maritime character or component, and on the other hand thematic experts and stakeholders as well as project representatives are invited to ensure a holistic view to the topic of Blue skills.

BALEX also wants to raise general awareness of the legal questions related to the Baltic Sea region through organizing events open for public. Such an event with the theme "Who rules the Baltic Sea" is under preparation for the jubilee year of the 100-year-old Finland in cooperation with Centrum Balticum. BALEX is also contributing to several Baltic-Sea-Region-themed events of its partner organizations.

EDUCATION

In the upcoming months, emphasis will be laid on the preparations of an international research seminar in Baltic Area Law. The seminar will be held in Turku and is expected to cover e.g. multi-level governance, interaction of the regulation layers, maritime transport, environmental protection and maritime spatial planning in the Baltic Sea region. The target groups of the planned seminar are researchers and PhD students. BALEX will also gladly help law students with e.g. the selection of a Baltic-Sea-related Master's Thesis subject. In addition, practical training periods for law students by BALEX are in the making.

In addition, the Finnish Maritime Law Association, chaired by Henrik Ringbom, is organizing a new 7 ECTS pro bono course on maritime law for the universities in Turku in November. The initiative is closely linked to BALEX and has been very successful with the course being fully booked. Lecturers will be practicing maritime lawyers and persons linked to Finnish universities.

ON-GOING PROJECTS

Since the previous newsletter, several projects have progressed.

The study for the Finnish Ministry of Transport and Communications on the implementation of international transport conventions in Finland had been completed in late 2015. The study is now published and available at www.lvm.fi/documents/20181/877203/Julkaisuja+10-2016.pdf/a73129a0-a3c1-4932-9d17-8e69569777e5

Currently three research projects are on-going.

BaltReg

BaltReg is a legal and political science-oriented research project sponsored by the Academy of Finland on multi-level governance in the Baltic Sea region, 2015-2018. Recent activities include a seminar on regulatory gaps and hotspots in the Baltic Sea on 28-29 April 2015 in Turku and the completion of a new textbook on maritime law



and the Baltic Sea in Finnish (see <http://kauppa.tietosanoma.fi/9789518853964>). The first postdoc, Dr Savitri Jetoo from Canada, has been recruited in October and the next one will hopefully join the team in early 2017. The main events of the BaltReg project in 2017 include an international conference on 23-25 August in Korpoström on multilevel environmental governance of the Baltic Sea and hosting a workshop on the same topic at the Nordic Environmental Social Science Conference on 6-8 June.

AAWA

AAWA (Advanced Autonomous Waterborne Applications Initiative, 2015-2017) is funded by the Finnish Funding Agency for Innovation (Tekes) and led by Rolls-Royce. It addresses various challenges linked to automated ship operations and unmanned ships. Here too, the role of BALEX, through ÅA and TY, is to assess the legal issues involved. A report which includes the main findings to date, including on the legal challenges with unmanned shipping, is available at: www.rolls-royce.com/products-and-services/marine/services/ship-intelligence/remote-and-autonomous-operations.aspx.

Compmon

The EU-CEF project CompMon (2014-2016) assesses various methods to monitor compliance with the new sulphur requirements on ships' fuels, notably through the use of remote surveillance and various other new technologies. The project is also a Flagship project in the Policy Area Clean Shipping of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The role of BALEX is linked to studying the legal questions involved. An interim report was produced in January 2016 and the final report will be ready by the end of 2016. ÅA, through Henrik Ringbom, has also participated in the 1st CompMon operator workshop and in CompMon Stakeholder conference 1 (both in April 2016 in Helsinki).



NEW IDEAS FOR COLLABORATION PROJECTS ARE WELCOMED

BALEX's main idea is to become a hub to connect the researchers of and the experts in Baltic area legal matters and to connect this expertise with the concrete needs of the Baltic Sea region; its countries, regions and cities, students, officials, NGO's and other players. BALEX is constantly looking for new research projects and is also willing to offer its legal expertise for assignments related to the Baltic Sea region and to participate with a legal perspective in on-going research projects. The expertise of BALEX and its actors can also be utilized as background information in news, external topical events and smaller research projects. BALEX warmly welcomes new associates, scientific partners and other partners in cooperation. Feel free to contact us with any ideas or suggestion!

With all inquiries related to BALEX and suggestions for collaboration, please contact our personnel!



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Wishing all BALEX collaborators a nice autumn!



Photo: Tapio van Oolk



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