

Newsletter

Dear readers,

We are pleased to inform you about the work of our blog [Jean Monnet Saar](#) in our first newsletter.

Who we are and where we are going

Jean Monnet Saar is an academic blog run by Prof. Dr. Thomas Giegerich, LL.M. (Univ. of Virginia) and his editorial team. The aim is to make European law, European-related international law and the developments of European integration with their effects on national law accessible to a broader public.

Our blog provides a platform to publish brief statements on current challenges or to conduct thorough assessments of European or international law topics. In an era where the fast pace of life and the flood of information make it difficult for the general public to engage with complex issues in a nuanced way, our blog helps to address legal problems and develop solutions.

Our blog has had a new design since the beginning of 2024. The redesign of the website has also been accompanied by personnel changes. *Vinzenz Boddenberg* has taken over the editorial management of our blog. The editorial team of *Dennis Traudt* and *Annika Blaschke*, postgraduate students at the Europa-Institut at Saarland University, has been expanded to include *Jan Philipp Huth*, a postgraduate in Frankfurt (Oder). In addition to the now four-member editorial team, *Prof. Stefanie Schmahl*, *Prof. Astrid Epiney*, and *Prof. Christian Calliess* make valuable contributions in the scientific advisory board.

Our ambitious goal for the *Jean Monnet Saar* blog is to develop it into a flagship of open access publishing in European law and European international law. Our aim to

present the legal debate on issues related to the European integration process in blog format and through the publication of academic papers is unique in Germany.

The importance of European law in a rapidly changing world

The results of the European Parliament elections have left many of us somewhere between shock and relief, resignation and optimism. What matters is how we perceive the challenges of the 21st century and whether we trust the European Union to play a decisive role in meeting them. Can this unique supranational union with its legal order only react to problems, or is it in a position, as an independent force in the European multi-level system, to actively shape its own future and that of the continent together with the member states?

Young academics, in particular, have to deal with crises that, regardless of their academic value, have great practical relevance. A war has been raging on the European continent for several years, and its imperialist motives make it difficult to look hopefully toward a peaceful future. We are also increasingly feeling the effects of climate change in our own lives. In addition to these external factors shaking Europe, our continent is not spared from internal challenges: political developments in some European countries make it difficult to realize fundamental values such as the rule of law and democracy.

Having assessed the situation, how can we use the tools of (European) law to contribute to a better future?

For decades, the German State of Saarland was a pawn in the power struggle between Germany and France. It was not until 1957 that the Saar question was resolved peacefully, amicably, freely and self-determinedly within the European framework. This makes the Saarland a model for cross-border cooperation and demonstrates the value of European integration: reason enough for us to academically accompany the legal development of Europe from here.

Our posts

In the following, we would like to give you a brief overview of selected posts from the last six months on our blog.

Being affected by the recent flood events in Saarland has sensitized us to climate change-related severe weather events. In our [Saar Expert Paper Series](#), Prof. *Thomas Giegerich* and Dr. *Julia Jungfleisch* examine the role of national and international court decisions in implementing effective climate protection measures. Using selected court cases at the state, regional European and American, as well as UN levels, they investigate the extent to which states can be encouraged to comply with bindingly agreed climate protection objectives through strategic litigation.

Following this question, the climate judgment of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) of April 9, 2024 has received much attention. In a [Saar Brief](#), Dr. *Julia Jungfleisch* highlights the significance of the ruling for climate protection in Europe and answers the question of whether the ECtHR has exceeded its jurisdiction in the verdict.

The European Parliament was re-elected at the beginning of the month. In a [Saar Expert Paper](#) on our blog, *Ralf Michael Gitzen* examines recent reform efforts in European electoral law. In particular, he examines the European Parliament's draft regulation from May 2022, which includes an obligatory election threshold and a quota system in favor of women. The study also addresses the ongoing reform of the Direct Elections Act from 2018.

The Spitzenkandidaten principle for the election of the Commission presidency was broadly discussed in the media in the run-up to the election. [Christina Jacobs and Christian Kisczio](#) present models of the Spitzenkandidat system and assess their compatibility with EU law. They propose an inter-institutional agreement between the European Council and the European Parliament obliging both to negotiate on the person to be elected.

A few months after the establishment of the Unified Patent Court for the European Union, [Dr. Laura Woll](#) presents the work and functioning of the court and examines first court decisions. The author concludes that the judgments are likely to have a positive impact on the European single market.

Publication Formats

We would like to draw your attention to our publication opportunities and encourage you to submit articles. Our uncomplicated review process allows us to be flexible in considering submissions and to publish them promptly in case of current events.

Saar Briefs (ISSN: 2749-0874): Saar Briefs are concise science-based analyses of current topics of European integration and EU law as well as international law and national law with a European focus. Submissions should not exceed 4,000 words.

Saar Blueprints (ISSN: 2199-0050): Saar Blueprints are an e-paper-series for young academics who analyse and comment on those topics. The length of a contribution should range between 4,000 and 6,000 words.

Saar Expert Papers (ISSN: 2199-0069): Saar Expert Papers are a collection of academic analyses on those topics written by specialists and addressed to the general public in electronic form. The length of a contribution should range between 4,000 and 10,000 words.

Please direct any queries or send your submissions to jeanmonnetsaar@europainstitut.de. We look forward to your contributions that will enrich our legal discourse on European topics.