

Motivation, Legal Knowledge and Preference Investigation of Hungarian Law Students

Authors : Zsofia Patyi

Abstract : While empirical studies under socialism in Hungary focused on the lawyer society as a whole, current research deals with law students in specific. The change of regime and the mutation of legal education have influenced the motivation, efficiency, social background and self-concept of law students. This shift needs to be acknowledged, and the education system improved for students and together with students. A new law student society requires a different legal education system, different legal studies, or, at the minimum, a different approach to teaching law. This is to ensure that competitive lawyers be trained who understand the constantly changing nature of the law and, as a result, can potentially transform or create legislation themselves. A number of developments can affect law students' awareness of legal relations in a democratic state. In today's Hungary, these decisive factors are primarily the new regulation of the financing of law students, and secondly, the new Hungarian constitution (henceforth: Alaptörvény), which has modified the base of the Hungarian legal system. These circumstances necessitate a new, comprehensive, and empirical, investigation of law students. To this end, our research team (comprising a professor, a Ph.D. student, and two law students), is conducting a new type of study in February 2017. The first stage of the research project uses the desktop method to open up the research antecedents. Afterward, a structured questionnaire draft will be designed and sent to the Head of Department of Sociology and the Associate Professor of the Department of Constitutional Law at the University of Szeged to have the draft checked and amended. Next, an open workshop for students and teachers will be organized with the aim to discuss the draft and create the final questionnaire. The research team will then contact each Hungarian university with a Faculty of Law to reach all 1st- and 4th-year law students. 1st-year students have not yet studied the Alaptörvény, while 4th-year students have. All students will be asked to fill in the questionnaire (in February). Results are expected to be in at the end of February. In March, the research team will report the results and present the conclusions. In addition, the results will be compared to previous researches. The outcome will help us answer the following research question: How should legal studies and legal education in Hungary be reformed in accordance with law students and the future lawyer society? The aim of the research is to (1) help create a new student- and career-centered teaching method of legal studies, (2) offer a new perspective on legal education, and (3) create a helpful and useful de lege ferenda proposal for the attorney general as regards legal education as part of higher education.

Keywords : change, constitution, investigation, law students, lawyer society, legal education, legal studies, motivation, reform

Conference Title : ICCSD 2017 : International Conference on Communism, Socialism and Democracy

Conference Location : Madrid, Spain

Conference Dates : March 26-27, 2017