

ECTIS eNewsletter

Information from the European Centre for Transnational Integration Studies



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Welcome to ECTIS eNewsletter No. 01

The European Centre for Transnational Integration Studies is a department, in loose contacts with many protagonists of world wide economic and political integration, of another think-tank's activities, LIBERTAS – European Institute GmbH. We welcome you as reader of this electronic eNewsletter, which will appear irregularly and whenever any information about new developments in the world of integration can be reported. If you do not receive ECTIS eNewsletter regularly, please subscribe it by writing per e-mail to ectis@libertas-institut.com

Please feel free to provide us with articles, texts, sources, bibliography, university and other study results of any kind, review books, book reviews and other suitable contents and material. We appreciate any feedback, and we are open for any cooperation, including exchanging internet links. Thank you in advance, and kind regards,

Hans-Juergen Zahorka
Director, ECTIS

First edition of ECTIS Bibliography is ready – how to make use of it

The European Centre for Transnational Integration Studies has published a bibliography on integration issues. Under www.libertas-institut.com, then ECTIS (in any language), it can be downloaded. The bibliography has been compiled by Silvia Bencivenga, our Stagiaire from Bolzano/Italy and an economist. It contains more than five hundred entries – books, articles, web pages – and will be continued. It is intended to update the bibliography at least twice a year. If the sources are available within the LIBERTAS Library, it is indicated. Some of the material is, however, temporarily outsourced.

ECTIS Newsletter contains information about the activities of the European Centre for Transnational Integration Studies. It appears irregularly and is published by LIBERTAS – European Institute GmbH, Vaihinger Str. 24, 71063 Sindelfingen, Germany, Tel. + 49 / 70 31 / 61 86 80, fax + 49 / 70 31 / 61 86 86, e-mail: ectis@libertas-institut.com, Internet: www.libertas-institut.com. Editor: Hans-Juergen Zahorka. All contributions may be reprinted, under the explicit condition that the eNews are quoted as source and that immediately after appearance a copy of the publication is sent to the project. This eNewsletter contains articles, which were thoroughly researched, however the editors cannot carry any responsibility for the contents. Their contents reflect not necessarily the position of ECTIS, but if not otherwise stated the opinion of the authors.

In general, the archives are available to the public, however students or researchers would have to pay the copy fees if photocopies are requested, as well as an administrative fee of 10 EUR. The copy fees are at present 0,25 EUR per page.

Students and researchers wanting photocopies of articles etc. are asked to verify in the bibliography exactly if ECTIS has the material available. Personal research is not excluded, but will have to be announced as soon as possible by e-mail and the dates must be negotiated.

Central Asia: How trade and transport facilities can be improved?

“Trade and Transport Facilitation Issues in the CIS 7, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan” is the title of a new study by World Bank’s Eva Molnar and Lauri Ojala, World Bank Consultant. It makes clear that without a common transport policy the seven Central Asian countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tadjikistan, Uzbekistan and Moldavia (CIS 7) but as well as Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan lose lots of money to their citizens. Foreign trade of these countries is regularly characterised by distant markets, dominated by few commodities. Whereas worldwide transport costs in foreign trade are usually three times as high as customs tariffs, in the CIS 7 + 2 transport costs are at least three times higher than in developed countries. The total of transport costs in the CIS 7 + 2 may amount up to 50 percent of the value of the goods, exceeding by far the comparable costs of the main competitors, and including many unofficial payments (e. g. semi-compulsory guard services).

The study, which shows in an excellent way the urgent need for transport integration has been presented in January 2003 and can be downloaded on the ECTIS web page (www.libertas-institut.com, under “ECTIS”).

Free Trade Area European Union – Lebanon by 2015

On the 2nd March, 2003, the Interim Trade Agreement between the European Union and Lebanon entered into force, preparing for the EU-Lebanon Free Trade Area intended to be set up by 2015. Some observers indicate that it might be even before this date that a Free Trade Area can be established, as normally developing economies tend to have a exponential tendency.

The agreement will bring big advantages to Lebanese exporters as essentially all goods from Lebanon can enter into the European Union without any tariffs. During the next 5 years, EU exporters to Lebanon will have to pay some tariffs, and afterwards there will be a progressive tariff reduction within 12 years. At the end there will be no tariffs any longer between the two parties.

This agreement will for sure help Lebanon with its bid for WTO membership, as well as with the structural negative trade balance of Lebanon with the EU (in 2001 there was a deficit of 2,7 billion EUR). It will also help the EU to create a global free trade agreement with the whole Mediterranean area.

UNCTAD Dispute Settlement Course now available online

An online course on dispute settlement in international trade, investment and intellectual property is now available, free of charge, on the UNCTAD website (<http://www.unctad.org/dispsett/>).

The course focuses on the basic rules and jurisprudence of dispute settlement at the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) and the arbitration rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL). It also looks at three regional approaches – those of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The course will serve as pedagogical material for workshops to be convened by UNCTAD in the coming years in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, the Middle East, the Pacific, and Eastern and Central Europe. Workshop participants will be drawn from government, universities, business and the legal profession. The course can also be used as training material for universities and training institutions in developing and transition countries.

The course (in English only) consists of 41 modules, 20 of which are currently available. The others will be online by 1 August.

For further information, please contact Erik Chrispeels, Project Manager, Project on Dispute Settlement in International Trade, Investment and Intellectual Property (tel: +41 22 907 5829, erik.chrispeels@unctad.org).

West Nordic Council: To them blue sea is what green fields are to other countries

The nations of the North Atlantic make up a very large geographical area: Iceland, Greenland, the Faroe Islands. Being the smallest member country, the Faroe Islands territory grows from 1,400 sq. km to almost 30,000 sq. km when its sea territory is included. The vast blue sea is to the West Nordic Countries what green fields and woodlands are to other countries.

The Faroe Islands and Iceland were populated by Norse vikings from around the 9th century whereas the history of Greenland dates back more than 5000 years. The Norse settlers arrived in Greenland in around 982 where they lived for almost 500 years. In more recent times contacts between the West Nordic Countries have been firmly established, particularly in the fishing business. Living conditions in these three countries were often rough. Small communities were surviving in very isolated conditions. The three countries thus share historical and cultural bonds as well as the basic natural and economical conditions. The special cultural and geographic conditions of the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Iceland were subject to political discussions of the early 1980s.

Subsequently, the West Nordic Countries agreed to establish a joint parliamentary organisation. The chief aim would be to cooperate on common problems and to conduct positive and constructive cooperation regarding West Nordic, or North Atlantic, issues with the Nordic Council as well as other organisations.

The West Nordic Parliamentarian Council of Cooperation was formed in 1985. In 1997 the name was changed to the West Nordic Council as the member parliaments approved the Council's present Charter. The parliaments of the Greenland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands each appoint six representatives to the West Nordic Council - i.e. a total of 18 members. The Annual General Meeting constitutes the West Nordic Council's supreme authority. The Council's general work and activities throughout the year are organised and conducted by the Presidium. The Presidium, consisting of one member from each delegation, is composed of the president, the 1st vice president and the 2nd vice president. The West Nordic Council's work is realised through recommendations, which are presented to the parliaments of the member countries. Subsequently, the recommendations are passed on to and executed by the appropriate minister.

The West Nordic Council does not distribute money for grants etc. but plays an excellent role in the interparliamentary work of the three countries and regions concerned. Its homepage is: www.vestnordisk.is.

Book & Media Review

Peter-Tobias Stoll/Frank Schorkopf: WTO – Welthandelsordnung und Welthandelsrecht, Koeln 2002, Carl Heymanns Verlag, ISBN 3-452-24850-X, 54,00 EUR

With not quite 300 pages the authors teaching in Germany's Goettingen and Heidelberg universities landed a comprehensive and topical book in German language, teaching the reader on almost every major aspect of the World Trade Organisation. Since 1995 the WTO has obtained a prominent role on global level like its predecessor institution GATT has never reached. This profile is also due to the many protests about "globalisation". While the first chapter on principles and structures of the legal basics of the WTO gives an excellent overview on the history since the Uruguay Round of GATT, a solid overview on research instruments, book and journal sources as well as the Internet at the beginning of the book must be noted. Instructive in typography and layout, the Scholl/Schorkopf book contains not only a however short analysis on WTO law and its relation towards national legal structures but also an overview on the developments to come, including the Doha Round and the important subject of WTO democratisation. It is self-evident that chapters e. g. on non-tariff trade barriers, competition, anti-dumping, public procurement, dispute settlement, intellectual property protection and TRIPS are included. With the chapter on national legal systems and the WTO the authors could open a door to this part of the subject, which has sometimes been forgotten.

In the next issues of ECTIS eNewsletter:

- Focus on Central Asia – Will there be a regional "Cecchini Report"?
- WTO and regional integration: the legal situation, trends and tendencies