

Report on the activities of the Czech Center for Human Rights and Democratization International Institute for Political Science 2009/2010

The Czech Center for Human Rights and Democratization was established in September 2009 as an impartial non-profit institution engaged in multidisciplinary research in the human rights and democratization fields. The Center is based under the International Institute for Political Science of Masaryk University. Four members and 9 interns were involved in the Center's activities in the academic year 2009/2010.

Members of the Center: Lukáš Hoder, Ľubomír Majerčík, Hubert Smekal, Ladislav Vyhnánek

Interns: Katarína Šipulová, Lenka Popovičová, Helena Bončková, Lenka Lakotová, Ivan Prouza, Alžběta Kondelová, Monika Mareková, Tereza Kubíčková, Lucia Pitel'ová.

Bulletin and other publishing activities

The Center issues a monthly bulletin *Current Human Rights Issues* which provides information and short analysis of human rights related issues and which is divided into four sections: International Criminal Justice, European system of Human Rights Protection, International Politics and Human Rights, Czech Republic and Human Rights. Between December 2009 and June 2010 in total 7 Czech issues and one English issue under the name "Czech Human Rights Review", which is focusing on human rights topics within the Czech Republic, had been published.

The Center issued one policy paper "Proposals and Statements of Non-Governmental Organizations to the Reform of the European Court of Human Rights" (in Czech) and two studies "The Czech Republic and its Exemption from the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union" (in Czech) and "Slovakia vs. Strasbourg: Labsi Case" (in Slovakian).

During the period of 2009/2010 the members as well as the interns of the Center had published in various books, symposiums and magazines – in the new commentary to the Constitution of the Czech Republic, which was published by Linde in September 2010, in the magazines International Relations, Socioweb, Euroatlantic Quarterly, or on the blog Jiné právo.

Conferences and other events

Within its first year of existence the Center organized two expert events, both held at the Faculty of Social Science, Masaryk University. The first conference was held in December 2009 and focused on the European Court of Human Rights and the Council of Europe ("60 Years of the Council of Europe – 50 Years of the European Court of Human Rights"). In May 2010, the Center hosted a conference on the International Criminal Court. In both conferences representatives from ministries, the ECHR and the Council of Europe, high-profiled Czech lawyers and representatives of NGOs participated. The attendance of these events was always very high.

In May 2010, the Center, together with ELSA Košice, hosted an international conference called Human Rights Forum, which was organized in the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the European Covenant on Human Rights and the 20th anniversary of the Venice Commission. Between the participants there was a Slovakian judge to the ECHR Dr. Ján Šikuta, and Hubert Smekal who represented the Center with a contribution on accession of the EU to the European Covenant on Human Rights.

The members and interns had also actively participated in other conferences throughout the year: “Graduate Conference of the European Consortium for Political Research”, which was held in Dublin in August/September 2010; symposium „Czech Foreign Policy” organized at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Prague, and many others.