

Report on the Institute of European Law Annual Lecture 2013

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The European Union in the World: the limits of law and the constraints of politics

The Institute of European Law Annual Lecture 2013 on "The European Union in the World: the limits of law and the constraints of politics" was delivered by **Professor Panos Koutrakos** (<http://www.city.ac.uk/law/about/our-staff/academic-staff/panos-koutrakos>) of City Law School on 25 November 2013.

Professor Koutrakos joined The City Law School in January 2013 as Professor of European Law. He is a graduate of the Universities of Athens and London, completed a stage at the European Commission in Brussels and holds a PhD from the University of Birmingham.

Panos has taught at the Universities of Bristol (Professor of EU Law: 2006-2012), Durham (Professor of Law: 2004-2006; Lecturer in Law: 1999-2002) and Birmingham (Reader in EU law: 2002-2004). In September 2007, he was awarded a Jean Monnet Chair in EU Law by the European Commission. He has held visiting posts the Universities of Melbourne (2009, 2013), Sydney (2008, 2010), New South Wales (2013), Iowa (2000, 2002), Michigan (2005), and Antwerp (since 2008). He is the joint editor of the *European Law Review*. In addition to EU external relations, Panos writes on the law of the single market, with emphasis on the free movement of goods and services. He has also contributed to training programmes for judges and civil servants from central and eastern Europe.



The Lecture looked at legal and political aspects of the state of EU external relations, also called EU international relations or EU foreign policy. This analysis of the rules and policies governing the interaction of the EU with the outside world, third states and international organisations also included the defence and security policy of the Union and allowed the audience to appreciate both the shortcomings and the achievements of the EU in this field. While the current state of EU external relations might not meet the expectations of the Constitutional Convention, much has been achieved since the Treaty of Lisbon to address and ultimately overcome the lack of institutional muscle and incoherence of the legal framework. A redefined office of the High Representative includes both the Common Foreign and Security Policy and old 'First Pillar' aspects of EU external relations. The first occupant of this post, Lady Ashton, has done much to establish the new European External Action Service envisaged in the Treaty of Lisbon. New bodies such as the European Defence Agency have started operations. The Common Defence and Security Policy, while being limited and raising many questions, has put several military and security missions on the ground. The EU is gradually becoming an actor on the international field. Professor Koutrakos delivered a thought-provoking and inspiring insight into the state and problems of the role of the EU in the world in 2013.

Each year the Institute of European Law invites an eminent European lawyer or academic to present its annual lecture on a European legal topic. Past speakers have included such distinguished visitors as Sir David Edward, Professor Alan Dashwood and Sir Konrad Schiermann, Gisela Stuart, Hon Mr Justice Elias, Judge Nicholas Forwood, Sir Christopher Bellamy and Professor Piet Eeckhout.

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