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*Report on the Third International Juridical Days in Torun
'Law-Society-Democracy', Toruń 15-17 May 2024*

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The Third International Juridical Days in Torun ‘Law-Society-Democracy’ conference was held at the Nicolaus Copernicus University (NCU) in Toruń and organised by one of the University’s 16 faculties, namely the Faculty of Law and Administration. Founded in 1945, the NCU is a public higher education institution, one of the largest, oldest and most prestigious universities in Poland. The Faculty of Law and Administration, which was also founded in 1945, from the very beginning of its existence created a solid basis of the NCU. One of the activities that could be described as a ‘trademark’ of the Faculty of Law and Administration of the NCU is

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undoubtedly its international experience. For many years, the Faculty has been organising conferences, seminars, and other scientific events with the participation of foreign legal practitioners, scholars and academics representing a number of universities and other research-focused institutions from all over the world, e.g. the USA, Brazil, Italy, Germany, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Hungary, Croatia or Ukraine.

Since 2022, the Faculty of Law and Administration of the NCU has been also organizing another cyclical scientific event, which is the International Juridical Days ‘Law-Society-Democracy’ conference. The scientific directors of this conference are Professor Maciej Serowaniec and Professor Zbigniew Witkowski, whereas the scientific secretary is PhD Aleksandra Kleśta-Nawrocka. The main aim of the event is to enable its participants to present their research work, exchange ideas and develop collaborations between the scholars from the NCU in Toruń and other universities. The main theme of the International Juridical Days ‘Law-Society-Democracy’ conference is the issue of the role and importance of law in the process of shaping and developing a democratic society in the face of the challenges of the modern world. The COVID-19 pandemic and a full scale armed aggression against Ukraine in 2022 were both phenomena that have made a great impact on social relations, economic stability and they brought significant setbacks in terms of fundamental rights protection. Therefore, the State and public authorities play a crucial role in maintaining the ability to respond, especially in case of a significant threat to public health or public safety exists. Both in 2022, 2023 and 2024

the conference papers were devoted to the analysis of these fundamental issues and the purpose of the seminar was to show and discuss these issues from Polish and international perspective. For this reason, representatives of leading foreign research institutions were invited to participate in the conference as speakers.

The Third International Juridical Days ‘Law-Society-Democracy’ conference took place on 15-16 May 2024, at the Faculty of Law and Administration of the NCU in Toruń. Attendees to the conference were 17 international academics and scholars, representing 6 countries, one law firm and 9 universities from around the world. The conference programme comprised lectures, discussions and accompanying events, including the annual meeting of Deans of Law Faculties associated in the YUFE (Young Universities For Europe) consortium. This accompanying event was an excellent opportunity for deans and vice-deans from YUFE partner universities to debate on the process of internationalization of education and scientific research, and to discuss new trends in legal education.

The Third International Juridical Days ‘Law-Society-Democracy’ conference program promised exciting discussions. Chief Guests for the conference were:

- Prof. Gabriella Mangione (University of Insubria), *Recent Developments in Regionalism. The Italian Case*;

- Prof. Roberta Santoro (University of Bari Aldo Moro), *Conflict Resolution through Dialogue and Democratic Methods*;
- Prof. Gaetano Dammacco (University of Bari Aldo Moro), *The Future of Democracy is... Democracy*;
- PhD Agnieszka Kamińska (Honorary Consul of the Republic of Malta in Cracow), *The Migration Crisis and Refugee Status in Relation to the Protection of Women's Rights on the Example of the Republic of Italy*;
- Prof. Dr Lars Viellechner (University of Bremen), *The Notion of the Public in Digital Society*;
- Prof. dr Marta Mochulska (Ivan Franko National University of Lviv), *Democracy in Ukraine: Challenges During Martial Law*;
- Prof. Agnieszka Laskowska-Hulisz, (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń), *Whether AI Will Replace a Judge in Civil Proceedings?*;
- Prof. Dr Stjepan Gadžo (University of Rijeka), *Sustainable Development and the Reform of International Corporate Tax Law*;
- Prof. Jerzy Lachowski, PhD Natalia Daško (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń), *Criminal Law Assessments of Causing a Traffic Accident Involving an Autonomous Vehicle*;
- Dr. Yaroslav Nedilko (Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv), *Peculiarities of the Investigation of War Crimes*;
- Dr. Bogdan Shcherbyna, *Inheritance during Martial Law*;
- Prof. J. Bojarski, PhD Natalia Daško (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń), Carolina Gregory Moraes (Universidade Federal de

Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte), *Extension of Environmental Protection Compared to General Conditions for Corporate Criminal Liability*;

- Dr. Valentyn Bazhanov (Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv), *Trademarks on the Territory of Ukraine during Martial Law*;
- Marc P. Weingarten (the Locks Law Firm), *Recent US Democracy Challenges*;
- Ivan Yatskevych (National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy), *The Future of Social Dialogue and Civil Society in Ukraine and the EU Integration*.

As can be observed from the programme, the conference was interdisciplinary. Since the author of this report is interested in constitutional law, she provides the reader with a brief overview of the two lectures: the ones delivered by Professor Gabriella Mangione and subsequently by Professor Marta Mochulska.

Professor Gabriella Mangione briefly presented a history of the Italian regionalism implemented with the 1948 constitution and strengthened with the Constitutional Reform of 2001, which changed the allocation of powers between the state, the regions, and the local authorities. Yet, the Italian regionalism is still evolving and its future remains unclear, especially after the submission in 2023 of a draft law on ‘differentiated autonomy’. The new legislation aims to decentralize decision-making on key areas, e.g. education, health, infrastructure and cultural assets, to the regions, as well as financing of these areas. The new law is expected to undermine inter-regional solidarity by increasing existing inequalities between less

developed regions in the south of Italy and its northern regions since it also brings a new mechanism of allocation of the resources to the regions. Professor Marta Mochulska, in turn, examined the current legal situation in Ukraine. In her presentation she focused on the democracy challenges that Ukraine has been facing since the country was put under martial law after Russian invasion. She pointed out that the war had partially destabilised Ukraine and its plans for closer European integration and the implementation of a legal reform to achieve EU accession. She also highlighted the challenges of the Europeanization process of constitutional law while at war and finally presented some future prospects. In any case, a state of Ukraine's democracy and its future will strongly depend on the outcome of the ongoing armed conflict.

Finally, we can try to find some common ground, which is what Professor Maciej Serowaniec did in the final words of the seminar. He stressed that democracy was one of the main themes of the Third International Juridical Days 'Law-Society-Democracy' conference. He also admitted that no country in the world has a perfectly functioning democracy, including the United States of America, which for many decades has been promoting democracy and its values across the globe and supporting democratic transitions in various countries. Yet we all must attempt to strengthen democratic regimes, because, as Professor Gaetano Dammacco rightly pointed out in his lecture, the only alternative to democracy is... democracy.