



The Academy of European Law's co-operation with the EU presidencies

The co-operation between the respective EU presidency and the Academy of European Law (ERA) in the organisation of conferences related to current legal debates began in 2005. During the first half of 2006, ERA is co-operating with the Austrian Presidency of the European Union in the organisation of three conferences on legal and ethical questions of European integration:

- Parental Responsibilities and Maintenance in European Civil Procedure, 15-17 May, in co-operation with the Oberlandesgericht (High Court) of Innsbruck
- Patenting Biotechnological Inventions: Debates and Perspectives, 29-30 May, in co-operation with the Federal Chancellery and the Austrian Patent Office
- Restorative Justice: Current Practice and New Developments, 26-28 June, in co-operation with the Federal Justice Ministry and the Institute for Legal and Criminal Sociology, Vienna

The co-operation with the Austrian Presidency was launched in February at the ERA annual reception in Brussels by Austrian Justice Minister Karin Gastinger. The series of seminars is a continuation of a successful co-operation between ERA and the two previous EU presidencies. During the first half of 2005, ERA jointly organised three events with the Luxembourg Presidency in areas that were presidency priorities, including the implementation of the Schengen *acquis* on police co-operation in the enlarged European Union. During the second half of 2005 a seminar on EU criminal justice was organised in the framework of the UK presidency in Edinburgh.

Highlighting presidency priorities whilst at the same time co-operating with a variety of partners from the respective presidency country—including the judiciary, government agencies and academic institutions—has proven a successful enterprise for both parties. This model, which adds visibility to presidency projects and contributes to the debate among legal practitioners, will be continued during the German and Portuguese presidencies in 2007.