

## **Annual Report 2014 - the Danish Bar and Law Society**

### **The People's Meeting "Folkemødet" on Bornholm 2014**

The Danish Bar and Law Society participated for the third time in the official "People's meeting" in June 2014. The People's Meeting "Folkemødet" situated on the Danish Island Bornholm is a unique platform with open debates where politicians informally meet citizens, business people and organizations and takes place every year in June and lasts for three days. Folkemødet is the Danish counterpart to the famous Swedish "Almedalsveckan".

In 2014 The Danish Bar and Law Society hosted a stand with numerous activities including a "legal emergency room" where lawyers for the duration of the event offered free legal advice to people visiting Folkemødet. Following the success from the previous years, a moot court was once again organized, this time displaying the functioning of a criminal law case. City court judges participated and Danish politicians acted as jury. The Danish Bar and Law Society is planning to attend the People's Meeting again in 2015.

### **Analysis of the framework for the legal profession in Denmark**

The Danish Government has during the summer of 2014, as part of a growth package, set up a working group to analyze the legal profession in Denmark. The aim has been to examine if changes in the regulation of the legal profession can create more competition and lower prices for legal services, among other things to ensure corporate competitiveness.

The Danish Bar was not part of the working group but teamed up with the Association of Law Firms and the Danish consultancy firm "Copenhagen Economics" in order to provide a qualified response and input to the conclusions from the ministerial working group. Copenhagen Economics drafted a report

containing a thorough technical analysis, including the market for legal services, the regulation of the legal profession and the regulation of access to the industry. The findings overall message is that the current regulation of the profession is appropriate and that that changes not can be expected to increase competition. The report was presented to the ministerial working group and the Danish Bar is currently awaiting the final conclusion and proposed changes from the group.

### **Project on Rule of Law within the Public Administration**

The Danish Bar & Law Society is in collaboration with a number of experts completing an analysis about the rule of law within the public administration. The research for the project and the drafting of the report was carried out in 2014. The purpose of the analysis has been to identify the most significant challenges regarding the rule of law within the public administration and to provide applicable recommendations. The General Council of the Danish Bar is expected to approve the analysis and recommendation in February 2015.

### **Rule of law in the taxation field**

The Tax Committee has had a very busy 2014. During spring a larger conference on rule-of-law within the taxation field was held. The conference took place at the Danish Parliament and was joined by parliamentarians and representatives from the civil society. It received solid press-coverage. The Committee has furthermore throughout the year had a strong focus on building up and maintaining already existing relations with a number of stakeholders within the tax field, including the Minister of Taxation, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Taxation, professors from different universities and high-profiled tax-lawyers. The Committee has also established a forum in collaboration with the Internal Revenue Service ("SKAT") in order to enhance the dialogue between the entities. Finally, the Tax Committee has cooperated with a number of other organizations, including accountants, with the aim of establishing some guidelines to help prevent and combat crossborder tax-evasion. The guidelines are intended to serve as a help for professionals who work with tax-evasion.

### **Participation in International Work**

The Danish Bar has throughout the year upheld a strong focus on its international work and cooperation with bars from other countries. This has included - beside active participation within e.g. the IBA and the CCBE – the hosting of events and seminars for foreign delegations visiting Denmark. This year the Bar has had the pleasure of receiving visits from e.g. Ukraine, China, Northern Ireland and Norway and explaining about how the system works in Denmark and how the legal profession is regulated.

### **Evaluation of the training of new lawyer**

During 2014 the Danish Evaluation Institute (DEI) conducted a study of the training of new lawyers in Denmark and how the training in its current form improves the students' future ability to fill the role of a lawyer. The project was initiated by the Danish Bar's Training Committee. The study consisted of a series of questionnaires to the upcoming lawyers and their employers, as well as a subsequent analysis of the data obtained. The study has included analysis on the contents of the current training programme and whether its objectives, form and level are appropriate. Also, the framework and organization of the training programme was examined. The report has been presented to the Ministry of Justice's Training Committee, which has welcomed the analysis and currently reflects on possible proposals to improve the training of new lawyers.

### **The Centre of law and justice**

The Centre of Law and Justice (CLJ) was established in 2009 with the purpose of establishing an inspiring think tank comprising representatives of all relevant private and public institutions. The Centre has in 2014 held a meeting with the Danish Parliament's Legal Affairs Committee and discussed current rule-of-law issues. The Centre of Law and Justice continues to serve as an inspiring think tank gathering representatives of all key players within the legal community.

Yours sincerely,

Torben Jensen