



Press Release

December 22, 2014

Legal Transfer in the Common Law World

Stefan Vogenauer appointed as new Director at the Max Planck Institute for European Legal History

European Legal History, Comparative Law and Transnational Private Law – these are some of the items on the research agenda of Stefan Vogenauer, currently Professor of Comparative Law at the University of Oxford. He is the most recent Scientific Member of the Max Planck Society and will join the Max Planck Institute for European Legal History as of October 1, 2015. Prior to this, he will already commence to build up his research department in Frankfurt. It will, inter alia, focus on the common law tradition of the past, present and future.

“Over the past years, the Frankfurt Max Planck Institute has become an even more dynamic institution with excellent potential for the advanced study of legal history. I am delighted to be able to contribute to this venture,” says Stefan Vogenauer. Vogenauer is currently Professor for Comparative Law and Director of the Institute of European and Comparative Law at the University of Oxford. He has just been elected as a Scientific Member of the Max Planck Society and has been designated as Director of the MPI for European Legal History. In the coming months he will set up his new research department in the new premises of the Institute in the Hansaallee in Frankfurt before joining full-time in October 2015.

“At a Max Planck Institute you have the freedom to work at the frontiers of scholarly research,” states Vogenauer who has an interest in European legal history, particularly the history of EU law and European integration more generally, comparative law with a particular expertise in Anglo-American law, transnational private law and legal method. Before taking up his post at the University of Oxford and a Fellowship at Brasenose College he was a Senior Research Fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law in Hamburg where he was awarded the Otto Hahn Medal of the Max Planck Society. “I have always been fascinated by the aspiration of the Max Planck Society to rank amongst the top research institutions worldwide,” he adds. Vogenauer is aware that co-operation



with the broader Higher Education sector is particularly important if this aim is to be achieved: "I am impressed by the legal history network of the Max Planck Institute, the Goethe University and other partners in the Frankfurt area. This is a promising environment to make legal history more visible both nationally and internationally."

The external reviewers who were involved in the process of identifying a new research director for the MPI for European Legal History were confident that not only will Vogenauer draw inspiration from his new research environment: the process will also work in the opposite direction. They were in agreement that Vogenauer's comparative approach to issues of contemporary law on the basis of historical analysis will give momentum to the whole discipline. One of his major research projects to be pursued over the coming years concerns the phenomenon of legal transfer in the common law world. It will broaden the current research activities at the MPI for European Legal History by introducing an Anglo-American perspective and reaching out to the non-Western traditions in the common law tradition. "When the Institute was established 50 years ago it was already intended to broaden European legal history beyond the continent, so as to include an Anglo-American dimension. This has now come true," says Thomas Duve, Director of the second research department at the MPI for European Legal History.

Photo: Professor Stefan Vogenauer, MPI eR

Photographer: Christiane Birr

