

Karsten, Jens / Wirtz, Markus Marcell, Der LL.M. in der Europäischen Union, Luchterhand Verlag, 2nd edition, Neuwied-Kriftel 2002, 154 pages in German, € 14,90

By Dirk Reidenbach

This book is addressed to anyone who plans to apply for a Masters Degree in Law at a university in a European country. It is divided into two main parts; the first covering general questions about the LL.M. programme, the second consisting of addresses and information about the different universities in the European Union and other countries of the European Economic Area. It also includes some sample application letters in many different languages.

First part: About the LL.M.

This part contains useful information about the LL.M. programme in general and the reasons why one should consider doing postgraduate studies abroad. It continues with the description of the application process and offers a path through this jungle. Also covered are some major welfare issues like health insurance, accommodation etc. The LL.M. programme is also put into a wider context by considering the opportunities which may exist after studying abroad.

To sum up, this part answers in a very concise way (28 pages) the most important questions one should ask when planning to study abroad. There are also many details covered that are very important but quite likely to be overlooked (For example, the book gives a reference for further reading on tax issues).

Second part: Universities

This part contains all, or at least most of the universities to which one can apply for an LL.M. or equivalent programme in Europe.

Although some universities have obviously received more attention than others, all the descriptions contain some basic information and contact details. The usefulness of this part is that it gives a brief overview of the universities and might help one to make at least a preliminary selection.

Who will benefit from this book? Probably anyone who is thinking about going abroad for an LL.M. degree. Regardless of having reached the decision to study abroad or still being undecided, this book will be a perfect start for every student

who wants to enrich his or her legal, social and human capabilities with an international postgraduate course in law.

This book cannot substitute one's own inquiries about different universities though. There are so many reasons why one chooses one university and not another (e.g. offered courses, well-known lecturers, university rankings, location etc.). All this cannot be covered by one book, especially as many of these factors change from year to year. But this book is particularly valuable for one reason: time. Many law students are planning to commence their postgraduate studies right after the first state exam. That means that they have to apply before they even pass their exams. Gathering information while preparing for the exam might not be easy as time is short. Although the websites of many universities and law faculties (and maybe also colleges) tend to be very informative and comprehensive, it is very time-consuming to collect every single piece of information from all the different sources. This is where this book steps in by answering the most fundamental questions. As well, it directs the reader to further questions he or she should ask when inquiring about the LL.M. programme. After the year abroad one knows the questions one should have asked before even applying, whereas these questions might not come to one's mind before having made the experience.

To conclude, this book might not give too much new information to the student who is already well informed about different LL.M. programmes (Although there might always be something that has not been discovered before. Has everyone already thought about what LL.M. is the abbreviation for? Read page: of the book!). This book can be highly recommended to anyone who is at the beginning of the inquiry process and wants to gain fast access to valuable information.