

# BUILDING EU CIVIL JUSTICE

Challenges of procedural innovations—bridging access to justice

Newsletter 1, June 2018

## Our Foundation Year - Getting Started

The time to enjoy obtaining the ERC consolidator grant and the warm congratulations—sitting in an office attentively decorated by my (former) PhD researchers—was short-lived, as an overwhelming period of grant preparation and recruiting started immediately. With the help of many dear colleagues, I was happy to put my dream team together and to get started on 1 September 2017.

Our project '[Building EU Civil Justice](#)' focuses on the digitisation of procedures and decision making, privatisation of justice (ADR), increased self-representation, and court specialisation (international commercial courts). We investigate how these trends influence access to justice in selected Member States of the EU, and what the repercussions are for the emerging EU civil justice system. Five focus jurisdictions are Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, and the United Kingdom (England & Wales). However, we are keen to broaden our horizons and to look beyond these five Members States and outside of Europe. We combine legal-normative and comparative research with empirical research, which helps us in testing and revising our ideas.

In these past ten months, we have worked with great enthusiasm on developing our research, presenting it in the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, England, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Croatia, and the United States, building networks with academics, practitioners, and policy makers, getting our first publications out, and organising events. We are grateful to everyone who accompanies us incidentally or more regularly on our journey. In particular we would like to thank the members of our Advisory Board for their kind support and advice on many occasions: Burkhard Hess, Chris Hodges, Peter Mascini, Elisabetta Silvestri, John Sorabji, and Sebastian Spinei.

We are delighted to present some of our first endeavours and accomplishments and hope you will enjoy reading this newsletter. Do not hesitate to get in touch with us as we continue building!

Xandra Kramer, Alexandre Biard, Jos Hoevenaars, Erlis Themeli, Georgia Antonopoulou, Emma van Gelder

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*'The secret of getting ahead is getting started'*

*Mark Twain*

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Left to right: Emma, Erlis, Xandra, Jos, Georgia, Alexandre

## In this newsletter:

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT MISS

### 10 July 2018 - Seminar “Innovating International Business Courts: a European Outlook”

On 10 July 2018, a seminar on international business courts will be held. A number of Member States have recently established or are in the process of establishing specialised commercial courts to facilitate international business litigation. In February 2018, the French Ministry of Justice inaugurated the International Commercial Chamber within the Paris Court of Appeal. In March, the Dutch House of Representatives adopted the proposal creating the Netherlands Commercial Court (NCC), that is currently pending in the Senate. In May, the Belgian proposal for the creation of the Brussels International Business Court (BIBC) was put before Parliament, while an initiative has been launched in Germany to strengthen Frankfurt as a centre for commercial litigation in Europe (the Frankfurt Initiative). The objective is to discuss these initiatives, in particular the novelties in the court administration and the procedural rules, to exchange views on the impact on international commercial and complex litigation and the European litigation landscape, and to reflect on the challenges ahead. The seminar will bring together academics, policy makers, practitioners, and business representatives from Europe and beyond. During drinks, selected young scholars responding to a call for papers are given the opportunity to present a poster.

The seminar is jointly organised by Erasmus School of Law (ERC project ‘Building EU Civil Justice’) of Erasmus University Rotterdam, in collaboration with the Max Planck Institute for Procedural Law Luxembourg, and the Montaigne Centre for Rule of Law and Judicial Administration (Utrecht University).

#### Programme:

Views from the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and France

Chair: **Harriët Schelhaas** (Erasmus University Rotterdam)

- ◆ Welcome: **Fabian Amtenbrink** (Vice-dean Erasmus School of Law)
- ◆ Opening: **Xandra Kramer** (Erasmus University Rotterdam/Utrecht University)  
**Burkhard Hess** (Max Planck Institute Luxembourg)
- ◆ The Netherlands: the Netherlands Commercial Court  
**Eddy Bauw** (Montaigne Centre - Utrecht University)
- ◆ The United Kingdom: A view from the Business and Property Courts in London  
**Sir Geoffrey Vos** (Chancellor of the High Court, London)
- ◆ The French approach to international commercial litigation  
**Gérard Gardella** (Haut Comité juridique de la place financière de Paris (HCJP))

Views from Germany and Belgium - Panel discussion

Chair: **Diana Wallis** (Universities of Hull and Oxford)

- ◆ Germany: The Frankfurt Initiative on international commercial litigation  
**Burkhard Hess** (Max Planck Institute Luxembourg)
- ◆ Belgium: The proposal for the Brussels International Business Court  
**Philippe Lambrecht** (Federation of Enterprises in Belgium (FEB))
- ◆ Panel roundtable  
**Duco Oranje**, President of the Netherlands Commercial Court of Appeal  
**Sir Nicholas Hamblen**, Lord Justice of Appeal, England and Wales  
**Ilse Couwenberg**, Court of Cassation, Belgium  
**Ina Frost / Ulrike Willoughby**, District Court of Frankfurt, Germany  
**Jean Messinesi**, President Paris Commercial Court, France  
**Fabienne Schaller**, Paris Court of appeal, France

## 19-20 November 2018 - Conference “Challenge Accepted! Exploring Pathways to Civil Justice in Europe”

We have secured a great line-up of keynote speakers and panelists geared around four themes: (1) The computer as the court; (2) Consumer ADR/ODR: Justice behind closed doors?; (3) Access to civil justice: Taking lawyers out of the equation? (4) Court specialisation: Turning the tide of the ‘vanishing trial’?

*More information and registration will follow soon.*

On 19 November, we will also have our annual meeting with our Advisory Board.

# PRESENTATIONS

## International Access to Justice Conference at UCL



From 11 June till 13 June 2018, Xandra, Erlis, Jos, Georgia and Emma participated in the UCL Conference on Access to Justice and Legal Services in London, hosted by the Centre for Empirical Legal Studies.

Xandra chaired two sessions. The first was on litigants in person, including contributions from the UK and the US on how to support litigants in person and about pro se litigation in US federal courts. The second session was on ‘Legal aid eli-

gibility’, including presentations on the assessment of the merits of the case in legal aid under ECHR case law and a comparative analysis on eligibility criteria. Erlis chaired a session on ‘Profession’. This panel included presentations on a pilot for specialist legal aid panels in Taiwan, and on an economic analysis of the benefits of early legal advice. The panels led to evolving discussions and insights on how other countries worldwide deal with access to justice issues and provided the opportunity to enter into dialogue on recent developments and innovations. We gained much inspiration and made interesting connections, which we will use to build further on our EU civil justice project.

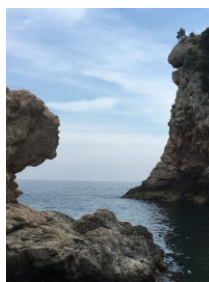
## Annual PhD Review Day EGSL



On 31 May 2018, Georgia Antonopoulou and Emma van Gelder participated in the annual Review day of the Erasmus Graduate School of Law. At this event all first year PhD researchers present their research to the academic staff. Emma enlightened us on the use of ODR and its challenges, and Georgia on the mushrooming of international commercial courts in Europe.

The formal evaluation of the first year of our PhD researchers will be in September. Emma’s second promotor is Stefaan Voet (Leuven University) and Georgia’s second promotor is Eddy Bauw (Utrecht University). Our ERC postdocs Alexandre, Erlis and Jos act as daily supervisors.

## Presentations on European Rules of Civil Procedure



Xandra Kramer gave two presentations at a conference on the Harmonisation of Civil Procedure in Europe in Dubrovnik on 28 and 29 May 2018. The first one focused on the EU civil justice agenda and the ELI-Unidroit project on European Rules of Civil Procedure as a model for Europe. The second presentation discussed the work on provisional measures within this project and its potential for a European approach to provisional relief in the national and cross-border context.



## Expert Group Meeting on the Use of AI in Legal Decision-Making



On 24 May 2018 an expert roundtable took place at the Erasmus University Rotterdam entitled 'The use of artificial intelligence in legal decision-making'. This Roundtable was organized by Erlis Themeli, Stefan Philipsen, and Evert Stamhuis with the support of the Erasmus Initiative Dynamics of Inclusive Prosperity. The experts attending the event came from the legal practice, government, academia, and ICT sector. The aim of the roundtable was to map the developments in and research on the use of AI in legal decision-making, and to outline a research agenda for the near future. Stefano Puntoni (Rotterdam School of Management) and Xandra Kramer were invited to give some 'food for thought' to the participants and to contribute to the discussion. Considering the success of the event, the organizers plan to develop a theoretical framework and to design empirical research on the reception of automated decision-making by court users.

## Presenting at ADR Conference at Leicester University

On 10 May 2018, Emma van Gelder and Alexandre Biard presented their work-in-progress at the ADR Conference that took place at Leicester University, England. The conference dealt with new approaches to ADR. Emma presented her paper on '*Private Initiatives Supporting (court) Digitization in the Netherlands: Sparking Controversy!*'. Alexandre presented a paper entitled '*Promise Kept? Impact of Directive 2013/11/EU on ADR Quality*'.

## PhD Defence Jos Hoevenaars: A People's Court?

On 19 March 2018, Jos Hoevenaars successfully defended his PhD thesis "A People's Court? A Bottom-Up Approach to Litigation before the European Court of Justice" at the Radboud University Nijmegen. His research focused on the role of individual litigation before the European Court of Justice, uncovering the (im)possibilities of the empowerment of citizens through EU law.



## Presenting at Cyberjustice Workshop in Bologna



Xandra Kramer presented on online dispute resolution ('ODR: Advancing Digital Justice in Europe and some lessons from the Netherlands') at a Cyberjustice workshop organised by CNR-IRSIG in Bologna on 10 May 2018.

See also our news item on [the deadlock in the digitisation of the Dutch judiciary](#).

## PhD Defence Erlis Themeli: The Great Race of Courts



On 23 March 2018, Erlis Themeli defended his thesis "The Great Race of Courts, Civil Justice System Competition in the European Union" at the Erasmus School of Law. His study focuses on the civil justice system competition in the EU, a form of regulatory competition in

which states try to attract parties to litigate in their jurisdictions.

## Court Systems and Private International Law

On 2 March 2018, Xandra Kramer gave a talk at a conference on 'How European is European Private International Law?' in Berlin. One of the issues addressed was the rise of international commercial courts in the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and Germany, as is studied in depth by Georgia Antonopoulou in our ERC project. Whereas specialised courts, special chambers within courts, court experts, judicial training, formal and informal networks are useful to improve the application of EU private international law rules, it should be realised that in many courts these rules are only relevant in a small number of cases, and measures should be cost-effective. There seems to be little evidence that European private international law is not European enough, and real challenges calling for reflection are the UK's exit from the EU while migration, security, financial stability, and environmental protection call for a global approach to inherent private international law questions. An author copy of the paper is available [here](#).

## Presentation at BACT Seminar

On 15 March, Alexandre Biard presented his on-going research on Consumer ADR quality in the EU during a Behavioural Approach to Contract and Tort (BACT) Seminar. He presented the preliminary results of the online survey that he conducted with national competent authorities in several Member States.

## Presentations on Digitising Justice at lus Commune Conference



On 24 November 2017, Xandra Kramer, Emma van Gelder and Erlis Themeli presented their work on the digitisation of justice at the

lus Commune Conference (workshop on civil procedure). The presentation prepared by Erlis focused on general aspects of the digitisation of justice. Xandra discussed the digitisation resulting from the Dutch Quality and Innovation of Justice program. Emma concluded with a presentation on Online Dispute Resolution, discussing private initiatives on digitisation in out-of-court dispute resolution and developments at the EU level concerning ADR/ODR.

## Presentations on Collective Redress at European Law Academy



On 12 October, Alexandre Biard and Xandra Kramer presented at the annual consumer conference at the European Law Academy in Trier. Alexandre presented a paper on the Recommendation on collec-

tive redress and the upcoming evaluation, while Xandra gave a talk on Dutch collective settlements and the pending bill on collective compensatory actions. Xandra also chaired a lively round table discussion on safeguards to avoid abuse of collective redress mechanisms in the EU.

## A2J and Navigating the Maze of the Law

Xandra Kramer and Christoph Engel (ESL; Max Planck Institute for Research on Collective Goods) presented their ideas for a vignette study on how laypeople navigate the maze of the law at Erasmus School of Law on 16 November 2017. The study aims to investigate the relevance of legal uncertainty for the decision of laypersons to rely on the legal system as a means for seeking redress.

## Presenting at the Self-Represented Litigation Network Conference



Xandra Kramer and Jos Hoevenaars participated in the second annual Self-Represented Litigation Network Conference in San Francisco on 22-23 February 2018. They co-hosted a panel with the Harvard Justice Lab on determining best practices and the intersection of research methodologies, and presented the ERC project to a broad American audience of members of the SRLN network.

## ERC project discussed at Queen Mary University London

On 22 November 2017, Xandra Kramer and Jos Hoevenaars presented the ERC project at the Erasmus-Queen Mary Dialogues meeting at Queen Mary University London. Xandra presented the background, objectives, and challenges of the project. Jos zoomed in on his postdoc project on self-representation, benefitting from two meetings he had with English experts on the day before.

## Presentation Eurojuris International

On 14 October 2017, Xandra Kramer gave a lecture and workshop for members of the EUROJURIS INTERNATIONAL Litigation, ADR & Contracts Practice Group, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Eurojuris (a leading network of law firms) in Brussels. She presented new developments in the area of international commercial litigation and ADR in Europe and discussed the consequences of Brexit for international litigation in Europe.

## Pathways to Empirical Legal Research

The ERC team had the opportunity to further explore the use of empirical methodologies in legal research and its relevance in the context of the ERC project. On 22 September 2017, Georgia Antonopoulou and Emma van Gelder attended the lus Commune Empirical Legal Research Workshop organized at Maastricht University, where they discussed and exchanged ideas with empirical legal experts on key topics concerning empirical research relevant to the project, including data gathering and data interpretation. On 26 September Alexandre Biard and Emma van Gelder attended a guest lecture at Leuven University, where they further considered the relevance of empirics when applied to the ADR sector during a guest lecture given by Professor Deborah Hensler from Stanford University.

## Kick-off Meeting EGSL for PhD Researchers

On 21 September 2017, the kick-off meeting of Erasmus Graduate School of Law (EGSL) of Erasmus School of Law took place where Emma van Gelder and Georgia Antonopoulou introduced themselves and their research projects. During this first year they follow research-related courses to guide them in their PhD research. Erlis Themeli was a panel member exchanging experiences and good practices on how to successfully pursue PhD research.

## Presentation ERC Project at BACT Annual Meeting



On 21 September 2017, Xandra Kramer presented the ERC project and all team members introduced their subproject at the annual meeting of the multi-disciplinary and international research program BACT at Erasmus School of Law. The synergies with projects of other researchers within the program strengthens the ERC research.

## Xandra Kramer Presents on eJustice at Wiesbaden Conference

On 23 June 2017 Xandra Kramer gave a presentation on 'Digitalization at full speed: Innovating justice in the Netherlands' at a conference organized by the EBS Law School in Wiesbaden dedicated to the 'Digital Single Market: Bausteine eines Digitalen Binnenmarktes'.

## Participation in ELI Annual Conference

Several team members participated in the ELI annual conference that took place in Vienna from 6-8 September 2017. On 7 September Xandra Kramer, as Co-Reporter of the "Structure" working group, presented the progress of the ELI-UNIDROIT joint project "European Rules of Civil Procedure" that is expected to contribute significantly to the development of European civil procedure. The first official consolidated draft of three sets of civil procedure rules on evidence, provisional measures and the service of documents was critically discussed with the panelists and the participants.

# OTHER ACTIVITIES

## A SELECTION

## Lecture at Leiden University

On 17 May 2018, Erlis Themeli was invited at the Leiden University to give a lecture on the competition of international business courts in the European Union. The lecture was part of the European Private International Law in a Global Context LLM course, and focused on the competitive activities of certain Member States and the reaction of lawyers thereof. This is the third time Erlis is invited to lecture at the Leiden University on this topic.

## Seminar on 'Legal Systems for the 21st Century'

On April 27, in collaboration with colleagues from HEC Paris, Leuven and Oxford Universities, Alexandre co-organised a seminar on 'Legal Systems for the 21st century' hosted by HEC in Paris. The seminar included speeches from Christopher Hodges and Stefaan Voet, as well as a roundtable with panellists from the OECD, French judiciary and academia.

## 'Writing Clinic' Course EGSL

Jos Hoevenaars teaches the 'Writing Clinic' course as part of the Graduate School program of Erasmus School of Law, which assists PhD researchers in the first phase of their appointment in elaborating their doctoral proposal and guide them towards a successful completion of their PhD by the end of the fourth year. In the Writing Clinic PhD researchers are assisted in writing their (first) academic article related to their research in small 'learning by doing'-groups.

## Report on Collective Redress in France

In May 2018, Alexandre co-authored (with Rafael Amaro from University Paris-Descartes) a report on collective redress in France. This report was intended to feed into a general report on collective redress commissioned by the European Parliament and supervised by Trans Europe Experts.



## Team Coached by ERC Members Make it to Finals in PIL Moot



Students Despoina Mouridi, Melvin Hanswijk, Benedicte Mourisse and Emma Ustunalp were selected to represent the Erasmus School of Law in the Pax Moot Court on Private International Law. ERC members Xandra Kramer, Erlis Themeli and Georgia Antonopoulou coached the students together with other members of our department, Alina Ontanu, Marta Kolacz and Priskila Penasthika. The students studied and intensively prepared the 'case' on environmental pollution involving legal actions in different countries. Following the successful preliminary round at the ICC in Paris, the team won the semi-finals against Paris I Sorbonne in The Hague. In the finals the Erasmus team encountered the SciencesPo students. Both teams pleaded for the first prize with creativity and inspiring enthusiasm. After long deliberations, the scale finally tipped over in favour of SciencesPo. Nevertheless, the students Melvin Hanswijk and Despoina Mouridi received special commendations from the jury for their pleading skills and Melvin was offered an internship with law firm NautaDutilh.

## Georgia Antonopoulou Obtains Max Planck Luxembourg Scholarship 2019

Georgia was selected for a Max Planck Luxembourg Scholarship 2019. From January to April 2019 Georgia will conduct her research on international business courts at the renowned institute benefiting from the excellent academic environment, the knowledge and experience of the MPI staff and the rich library. Georgia is looking forward to participating in the regular scientific events hosted at the institute and to exchange ideas with the fellow young MPI researchers!

## Master Class 'Research on International Commercial Courts'

On 8 February 2018, Erlis Themeli and Georgia Antonopoulou held a guest lecture entitled 'Research on International Commercial Courts' for the students of the Private Law Master Program. Erlis focused on the key characteristics of an efficient and competitive international commercial court. Subsequently, Georgia presented the recent initiatives on the establishment of international commercial courts in the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium.

## Innovating the Dutch Judiciary and Debt Collection Procedures

On 7 June 2018, an inspiring meeting on innovation of the judiciary took place in the Hague, organized by the Dutch Council for the Judiciary. The aim was to see how the judiciary can better meet the needs of society and of litigants. Xandra Kramer was asked to participate in a roundtable to reflect on how debt collection procedures can be organized more effectively, considering the debt problems and the usual absence of debtors at court hearings. She will also advise on proposals to improve debt collection procedures. This ties in with earlier research conducted by her and others commissioned by the Ministry of Justice. While then it was not considered necessary to take action, this empirically grounded research is now revitalized and considered to be an important source for justice innovation.



## 'Dynamics of Inclusive Prosperity' Grant for Erlis Themeli

In October 2017, the Erasmus University Rotterdam launched the Dynamics of Inclusive Prosperity initiative, which offers small grants to researchers with a clear interdisciplinary component and interested in investigating the social challenges for a comprehensive development of our societies. In January 2018, this initiative awarded Erlis Themeli a grant of 9500 euros for organising a roundtable on the use of automated decision making in courts. Erlis acted as main applicant, while his co-applicants were Stefan Philipsen (Erasmus School of Law), Gijs van Oenen (Faculty of Philosophy), and Stefano Puntoni (Rotterdam School of Economics). The project of Erlis aims at mapping the issues with using automated decision making in courts, identifying the legal problems, and developing a research agenda for the Erasmus School of Law.

# ARTICLES & BLOG POSTS

## Scholarly publications & forthcoming shortly

- ♦ X.E. Kramer, A Common Discourse in European Private International Law? A View from the Court System, in Jan von Hein, Eva-Maria Kieninger and Giesela Rühl (eds.), *How European is European Private International Law*, Intersentia (forthcoming 2018/19) ([draft author copy](#));
- ♦ X.E. Kramer, Strengthening Civil Justice Cooperation: The Quest for Model Rules and Common Minimum Standards of Civil Procedure in Europe, in: Marco Antonio Rodrigues & Hermes Zaneti Jr, *Repercussões do CPC - Processo Internacional*, Editora Juspodivm (forthcoming 2018) ([author copy](#));
- ♦ A. Biard, Collective redress in the EU: a rainbow behind the clouds?, *ERA Forum* May 2018, p. 1-16 ([full text](#));
- ♦ X.E. Kramer, Judicial Cooperation in Civil Matters, in: P.J. Kuijper, F. Amtenbrink, D. Curtin, B. De Witte, A. McDonnell & S. Van den Bogaert (Eds.), *The Law of the European Union*, Alphen aan den Rijn: Kluwer Law International 2018, p. 721-740 ([author copy](#));
- ♦ E.M. van Gelder & A.B. Biard, The Online Resolution Platform after one Year of Operation: A Work in Progress with Promising Potential, *Tijdschrift voor Consumentenrecht & Handelspraktijken* 2018(2), p. 77-82 ([full text](#));
- ♦ X.E. Kramer, E. Themeli & E.M. van Gelder, Digitalization at Full Speed: Innovating Justice in the Netherlands, in: M. Weller & M. Wendland (eds.), *Digital Single Market: Bausteine eines Rechts in der Digitalen Welt*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming 2018 ([draft author copy](#));
- ♦ A. Biard, Monitoring Consumer ADR in the EU - a Critical Perspective, *European Review of Private Law* 2 (2018), p. 171-196 ([full text](#));
- ♦ A. Biard, Sale temps pour l'action de groupe...la nécessaire recherche d'outils alternatifs pour résoudre les litiges de masse, *Revue Lamy Droit Civil* 157 2018, p. 21-26 ([full text](#)).

## Short papers, blogs & media

- ♦ E.M. van Gelder & X.E. Kramer, [The deadlock in the digitisation of the Dutch judiciary](#), *European Civil Procedure (EUCP)*, 25 April 2018;
- ♦ X.E. Kramer, [Update on 'This one is next: the Netherlands Commercial Court!'](#), *conflict-oflaws.net*, 14 March 2018;
- ♦ G. Antonopoulou, E. Themeli & X.E. Kramer, [Netherlands Commercial Court \(NCC\) expected to open its doors on 1 July 2018](#), *European Civil Procedure*, 9 March 2018;
- ♦ G. Antonopoulou, E. Themeli & X.E. Kramer, [This one is next: the Netherlands Commercial Court!](#), *conflict-oflaws.net*, 8 March 2018;
- ♦ G. Antonopoulou & E. Themeli, [The domino effect of international commercial courts in Europe – Who's next?](#), *conflict-oflaws.net*, 20 February 2018;
- ♦ E.M. van Gelder, [Reactie op Nieuwsuur uitzending over e-Court](#), *KElduidelijk.nl*, 29 January 2018;
- ♦ E.M. van Gelder & A. Biard, [Functioning of the ODR Platform: EU Commission Publishes First Results](#), *conflict-oflaws.net*, 15 December 2017;
- ♦ E.M. van Gelder, [Digitalisering in buitengerechtelijke geschiloplossing](#), *KElduidelijk.nl*, 10 December 2017;
- ♦ X.E. Kramer & E. Bauw, ['Commercial Court' is uitkomst voor complexe internationale handelszaken](#), *Het Financieel Dagblad (FD)*, 10 October 2017;
- ♦ A. Biard, X.E. Kramer & I. Tillema, [Dutch collective redress dangerous? A call for a more nuanced approach](#), *conflict-oflaws.net*, 3 October 2017;
- ♦ A. Biard, [Mandatory Mediation Procedures v Effective Access to Courts: CJEU Sets Down Criteria](#), *conflict-oflaws.net*, 11 July 2017.



# TEAM

## THESE ARE OUR ERC PROJECT MEMBERS & PERSONAL STATEMENTS

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*In our project research team we bundle, share, and nurture our knowledge, thinking, practical approach, creativity, diversity, passions, perspectives, and sense of humour.*

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### *What inspires us in our work, and in this project?*

#### **Xandra Kramer (PI)**

I wouldn't know where to start or end ... as my sources of inspiration are manifold, deriving from the 'greatest minds' to seemingly insignificant daily chats and experiences. An important drive for this project is to support making the whole greater than the sum of its parts (popular interpretation of Aristotle). To inspire others with my passion and my belief in a 'sense of justice' (John Rawls), in justice for all ('we're all the same on the inside', as my 8 year old tells me), and as much as possible in a tailor-made jacket. This project enables looking at justice problems and innovations from different angles, to try and connect some of the dots, and to do so together with an amazing team! I love to see how our researchers develop, and my aim is that they outgrow me sooner or later.



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#### **Erlis Themeli (postdoc)**



Technology is a computer. Court is justice. Technology and court is computer justice, in other words is RoboCop. RoboCop is the technology we wish for, but do not deserve. Studying the impact of technology and digitisation on courts, therefore, is something very serious and something I like. I hope this project will help in developing better court technology and maybe our own RoboCop.

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#### **Alexandre Biard (postdoc)**

How to access justice in the 21st century? For a long time, courts were the main go-to points for individuals when vindicating their rights. In the past years however, a myriad of alternative techniques have mushroomed and are gaining popularity across Europe. Which standards and rules should apply to this new 'privatised justice'? What are the consequences for civil justice systems? How should courts respond? We stand at a crossroad. The coming years will be key for determining the kind of justice that we want. I aim to explore these innovative pathways for accessing justice and to understand their limits.



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## Jos Hoevenaars (postdoc)



Structural injustices in the legal system through imbalances in the way litigants and their claims are dealt with are central to my interest in dispute resolution. Legal representation and trends towards more self-representation are important topics in this regard. I hope to contribute to a critical consideration of the pros and cons of increased opportunities for 'do-it-yourself justice'.

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## Emma van Gelder (PhD researcher)

"Cat: Where are you going?  
Alice: Which way should I go?  
Cat: That depends on where you are going.  
Alice: I don't know.  
Cat: Then it doesn't matter which way you go."

(Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland)



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## Georgia Antonopoulou (PhD researcher)



Two roads diverged in a wood, and I-  
I took the one less travelled by  
And that has made all the difference.

(Robert Frost, The road not taken)

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## Kyra Hanemaayer (student assistant)

I study both law and economics. In economics, we mostly focus on efficiency and how to maximize our own profits. The danger of this is that fundamental rights of the weaker part of society might be violated. In my opinion, we should not only focus on efficiency and the maximization of our own profits, but on the benefits of all people and the welfare of society as a whole. The rule of law is a powerful tool to achieve this and by improving access to justice, we can protect the weaker part of our society and improve the total welfare of countries. I am happy to support the researchers of the ERC team as a student-assistant and by this I hope to contribute to better access to justice.



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For more information: <http://www.euciviljustice.eu/>

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