

European Law LLM students explore EU law in practice in Brussels and Luxembourg

From 10 to 12 June 2026, students of the European Law LLM programme travelled to Brussels and Luxembourg for the annual study trip (so-called ‘RIO trip’). Over three intensive days, the group experienced first-hand how the EU law they study in the classroom is made, interpreted, litigated, and lobbied.

The programme of the trip is slightly different every year and this year, the trip began in Brussels at the [European Community Shipowners’ Associations \(ECSA\)](#), which represents the European shipping industry at EU level. Students learned about the sector’s central challenge of decarbonisation and gained a look behind the scenes of interest representation in Brussels: how ECSA coordinates its national members and engages with the Commission and the European Parliament. In the afternoon, the group was welcomed at [the Council of the European Union](#) for a general presentation, followed by an expert presentation by Mr Guido Sala Chiri on the Council’s rule of law dialogue.

The next morning, at [the European Commission](#), Mr Telmo Baltazar, Principal Adviser for corporate and political communication, framed the EU as a union of 27 diverse constitutional realities, held together not by force but by its legal order, and discussed the geopolitical pressures facing the Union today. Ms Veronique Bagge of EPSO then presented career opportunities within the EU institutions. The day concluded at [Transparency International EU](#), where Ms Carolina F. Gil examined the rule of law in the context of EU enlargement.

After travelling on to Luxembourg, the group spent the final day at the [Court of Justice of the European Union](#) and the [European Stability Mechanism \(ESM\)](#). At the Court, students toured the courtrooms and the famous Grande Salle, spoke with a référendaire, and attended presentations by Mrs A. Jorna, Legal Secretary in the Chambers of General Court President Mr van der Woude, and by a lawyer-linguist on how multilingualism underpins equal access to justice for all EU citizens. At the ESM, Senior Legal Counsel Mr John Goossen explained the Mechanism’s distinctive legal nature as an international organisation established by intergovernmental treaty and its role in safeguarding the stability of the euro area.

The trip offered students a unique view of EU law from many angles: institutional, judicial, financial, and civil society. As one participant put it afterwards: “It was very insightful to learn about how EU law works in practice from different perspectives and fields.”