

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Academic year: 2026/2027	
University: Comenius University Bratislava	
Faculty: Faculty of Law	
Course ID: PraF.UKPV/bPRV17-1222/25	Course title: Legal Aid Studies
Educational activities: Type of activities: seminar Number of hours: per week: 2 per level/semester: 26 Form of the course: on-site learning, combined	
Number of credits: 2	
Recommended semester: 3., 5.	
Educational level: I.	
Prerequisites:	
Course requirements: Ongoing evaluation: activity during interactive lectures (30 %); reflective paper (40 %); group presentation (20 %); peer-review assessment (10 %). Rating scale: A/1 = 91 – 100 %; B/1,5 = 81 – 90 %; C/2 = 73 – 80 %; D/2,5 = 66 – 72 %; E/3 = 60 – 65 %; FX = 0 – 59 %. During the examination, the student may use all available sources of legal information, in particular non-annotated legal regulations, commentaries, case law, legal literature, and legal information systems. Scale of assessment (preliminary/final): 100/0	
Learning outcomes: Knowledge: Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to: - recognise and explain the significance of the right to legal aid as a fundamental human right, including the impact of EU law and the Council of Europe on the concept of legal aid; - demonstrate the legal aid system in their home country; - compare different legal aid systems; - identify deficiencies in the legal framework governing legal aid; - identify the benefits of pro bono work for society, the legal profession, and law firms; - identify the professional and personal benefits of lawyers' pro bono engagement. - Skills: Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to: - collect and interpret relevant legislation, case law, legal doctrine, and other legal information related to the right to legal aid, and make informed decisions that also take into account social, scientific, and ethical aspects; - communicate information, concepts, issues, and solutions related to the lack of access to legal services. Responsibility and Autonomy: Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to:	

- critically assess the relevance of legal information and data and, on this basis, make socially responsible and morally sound decisions;
- provide constructive feedback;
- work in a group in an internationalised environment;
- deliver engaging presentations of their research findings.

Class syllabus:

Part One – Seminars (Weeks 1 to 5):

1.1 Introduction to the Right to Legal Aid

1.2 The Right to Legal Aid as a Fundamental Human Right and Its International Aspects

1.3 The Right to Legal Aid in the Slovak Republic and Conditions for Granting Legal Aid

1.4 Legal Aid Systems Worldwide

1.5 Benefits of Pro Bono Work

Part Two – Self-regulated learning (Weeks 6 to 9)

Part Three – Presentation of Group Projects (Weeks 10 to 14)

Recommended literature:

Barendrecht, M., Kistemaker, L., Scholten, H. J., Schrader, R., Wrzesinska, M. (2014) Legal Aid in Europe: Nine Different Ways to Guarantee Access to Justice? The Hague Institute for Internationalisation of Law. Tilburg: University of Tilburg. [selected chapters]

Flynn, A., Hodgson, J. (Eds.) (2017) Access to Justice and Legal Aid: Comparative Perspective on Unmet Legal Need. Oxford: Bloomsbury publishing PLC. [selected chapters]

Global Study on Legal Aid (2016) Global Report. United Nations Development Programme. New York: United Nations.

Hammerslev, O., Rønning, O. H. (Eds.) (2018) Outsourcing Legal Aid in the Nordic Welfare States. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. [selected chapters]

Jüriloo, K. (2015) Free Legal Aid – a Human Right. Nordic Journal of Human Rights, 33(3), 203-219.

Kerrigan, K., Murray, V. (2011) A Student Guide to Clinical Legal Education and Pro Bono. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan. [selected chapters]

Litwick, D. (2022) Lady Justice. New York: Penguin Press. [selected chapters]

Stevenson, B. (2014) Just Mercy. New York: Penguin Random House. [selected chapters]

Languages necessary to complete the course:

English

Notes:

The course is taught in English and is limited to 40 students. Enrolment in the course may be conditional upon the successful completion of a selection procedure.

Past grade distribution

Total number of evaluated students: 27

A	ABS	B	C	D	E	FX
66,67	0,0	25,93	3,7	3,7	0,0	0,0

Lecturers: JUDr. Mária Vaško Havelková, PhD.

Last change: 02.04.2026

Approved by: