

## Das neue Europa forscht in Luzern

Das Förderprogramm Sciex unterstützt noch bis 2016 exzellente Doktorierende und Postdocs aus den neuen EU-Mitgliedstaaten. Der Doktorand Paulius Zapolskis konnte dank Sciex ein Jahr lang an der Universität Luzern forschen. Eine bereichernde Erfahrung für beide Seiten.

■ CHANTAL VÖGELI

Das 2009 im Rahmen des Kohäsionsbeitrags an die aktuell zehn neuen Mitgliedstaaten am östlichen Rand der Europäischen Union (EU10) ins Leben gerufene Scientific Exchange Programme, kurz Sciex, fördert Doktorierende und Postdocs aller Fachrichtungen. Sciex-Stipendiatinnen und -Stipendiaten können bis zu zwei Jahre an einer Schweizer Universität forschen. Gewünschte Nebeneffekte des Programms sind die Nachwuchsförderung internationaler Forschender sowie die nachhaltige Vernetzung von Schweizer und EU10-Forschungsteams.

Am 1. Januar 2011 begrüßte die Universität Luzern ihren ersten Sciex-Fellow, den Doktoranden Paulius Zapolskis aus Litauen. Zapolskis forschte während eines Jahres an der Professur bei Daniel Girsberger an der Rechtswissenschaftlichen Fakultät. Vor seiner Rückkehr nach Litauen Ende 2011 sprach Paulius Zapolskis über seinen Aufenthalt in Luzern.

Das Interview mit Paulius Zapolskis wurde auf Englisch geführt und wird hier – entsprechend dem internationalen Charakter von Sciex – deshalb auch in Englisch wiedergegeben.

**Sciex Regional Office Lucerne (SRO): How did you learn about the Sciex programme?**

Paulius Zapolskis (PZ): A colleague of mine called my attention to the ongoing competition which well suited my needs at the time so I decided to apply.

**SRO: Why did you apply?**

PZ: I applied because the internship conditions were very acceptable to me. First of all, the entire application procedure and programme runs in English which is good for researchers from the Baltic and other states where German or French is less spoken. The fact that the Sciex programme is implemented at Swiss universities was of course also very inspirational. I knew the country a little bit as I did a two months internship at the Swiss Institute of Comparative Law in 2008. I did not know much about the University of Lucerne but by reputation I knew my host mentor professor Daniel Girsberger who is a well-known arbitration expert.

**SRO: What are your personal benefits?**

PZ: The biggest personal benefit is that I now have perfect conditions and resources to work on my doctoral dissertation. My topic is related to the *clausula rebus sic stantibus* legal doctrine in contract law. For me it is a fascinating topic and this makes my work here in Switzerland even more enjoyable. Another point is that this was a good opportunity to temporarily cut myself from the demanding practical lawyer's work as last five years I have been working at a law firm in Vilnius. Theoretical research which I am currently doing will definitely contribute towards my practical work in the future as these two fields always supplement each other.

**SRO: How is it for you to work in a Swiss research team?**

PZ: Very well, I am glad that Professor Girsberger is an expert of my PhD topic. I also benefit from various discussions with other academic staff members.

**SRO: How do you like living in Switzerland?**

PZ: Switzerland is a simply amazing country. I am mostly astonished and cannot get enough of its beautiful nature. It seems cliché to say that about Switzerland but that's really how it is. I am trying to use my free time while doing a variety of activities related to Swiss nature: mountain hiking, cycling, skiing, rock climbing etc. Also, most Swiss people are very helpful and tolerant towards foreigners. Swiss people have some stereotypes about Lithuania and the Baltic states and that is normal. So I am always happy to explain to those who are interested that Soviet Union collapsed more than 20 years ago and things changed radically, we are now a modern independent state with a clear Western orientation belonging to the European Union and all other major international organizations. Contrary to what some people think, our state language is not Russian as we have our own, very old and very distinct language [Lithuanian]. So these are some typical misconceptions, however, as I said, I am very comfortable explaining things as they are. In exchange, I am trying to learn as much as I can about the interesting Swiss history and culture.



«Von Vilnius nach Luzern»: Der Sciex-Doktorand Paulius Zapolskis.

**SRO: Would you recommend Sciex to other researchers from new EU-member states?**

PZ: Absolutely, it is a wonderful and very productive experience.

**SRO: What are your personal goals for the next few months?**

PZ: I would like to finish and defend my thesis and then, as I mentioned above, I am planning to continue my attorney career back in Lithuania. Simultaneously, I will keep teaching and continue my scientific career at Mykolas Romeris University in Vilnius. In the future I am also considering to try myself in European Commission in Brussels as I did an internship there and I liked the job. Or maybe one day I will return to Switzerland and try to work here, one never knows.

Informationen zum Sciex-Programm sowie zu laufenden Ausschreibungen können beim Sciex Regional Office Lucerne, welches dem International Relations Office der Universität Luzern angegliedert ist, eingeholt werden.

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