



Annex I Excellent University Departments' Project

Law in Transition: The excellence of the UNIBO Department of Legal Studies (DSG) in 2023-2027

The global scenario is characterized by transitions and changes in every sphere: progressive digitization that has involved collective and institutional interactions; growing dependence in decision-making and operational contexts on increasingly less transparent forms of artificial intelligence; and a climate change of epochal proportions that makes it necessary to rethink development models.

To these major evolutions that have marked the global context over the past decade, two largely unforeseen traumatic events have been added in recent years that are fundamentally altering collective strategic priorities and individual risk perceptions: the global pandemic crisis and the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

With the illusion of a global peace fueled by a globalized economic system gone, the prospect of a systematic risk society characterized by continuous evolution seems to be taking on increasing concreteness and demanding radically new solutions.

Inevitably, these challenges have a profound impact on the legal phenomenon, which represents in turn the fundamental backbone of social organization. Indeed, law must necessarily mirror these tensions and cannot give up the goal of governing them. Thus, there is also a process of transition in the role of legal science, which is faced with the need to apply traditional concepts to new contexts, but also to revise its conceptual structures and underlying methodological paradigms.

As a consequence, the role of the legal scholar in managing the changes taking place is evolving too. It is about recovering the idea of law as a form of social engineering and showing that the jurist's expertise is not only knowledge of normative texts, but capacity of identifying solutions that can interface with proposals from other disciplines.

In the 2018-2022 Project of Excellence, the Department of Legal Studies had set out to train global legal scholars through an evolutionary study of the source system. What we are now proposing to do contributes to giving the previous objective greater breadth and systematization. Indeed, in this Project, the global dimension embraces a broader horizon of meaning: the global legal scholar is such also because he or she is an interdisciplinary jurist who knows how to move within evolutionary processes.

The DSG intends to focus its teaching, research, and third mission over the next five years on this evolution by observing the phenomenon across three main axes: digital transition, climate change, and social change.

The planned infrastructure and personnel investments will ensure sustainability of the project activities.

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