

A new line of research into the right to energy



Pau Public Law has created a new research programme dedicated to the “right to energy”.

Interview with Philippe Terneyre, professor of public law and joint manager of the project with Denys de Béchillon, also a professor of public law at UPPA.

“How did you become interested in the right to energy?”

“Local authorities and companies have long asked me to work on energy-related problems. It's a field that I know well. In particular, in 2010 I published a book about contracts for the installation of renewable energy production units. Denys deBéchillon and I have found that the idea of creating a new research team has become more and more relevant.”

“Why set up a programme?”

“Energy is becoming a major issue in terms of both national and international regulation. But the law on this subject is still in its infancy. Few people are working on this issue outside the voluntary sector. University research into the subject is not structured and specialists are rare. When dealing with such sensitive and contentious issues as windfarms, renewable energy or, for example, nuclear energy, it seemed to us to be essential to create an official field of research, capable of offering an external, academic, and above all independent vision.”

“How do you work?”

“Denys and I are responsible for the scientific coordination of the programme. Aurélie Launay and Isabelle Montin are responsible for overseeing the projects and for budgetary and administrative management.

For the moment the team of young researchers consists of three post-doctoral students working on the right to access to energy, the circular economy applied to natural gas and the development of a legal framework for the gas market – and three PhD students working on precise themes: local authorities and energy, the law relating to electricity distribution, local authorities that produce energy...Our ambition is, on the one hand, to contribute to the creation of a university-based network, and on the other, to strengthen our links with local authorities and major companies in the industry. Two partnerships have already been signed with GRDF and TIGF.”

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