

Environmental Impact Assessment in International, European and Czech Law

Abstract

In recent years, the legislation on environmental impact assessment in the Czech Republic has undergone a great number of significant changes. The existing procedures in the EIA as well as in the subsequent authorization process have been substantially modified. The thesis aims to provide an overview of the EIA system in the Czech Republic, with particular regard to the recent changes made thereto.

The thesis focuses on the main features of the EIA and analyses the institutes applied therein, considering the requirements of international and EU law and the conclusions of the judicial authorities or other independent bodies established to review the compliance with these requirements. Attention is paid not only to standard forms of assessment but also to special regimes in which certain project are assessed. The thesis also deals with the specifics that characterize the EIA procedure, such as public participation or impartiality and expertise of the assessment. The thesis identifies the pros and cons of the current legislation, including *de lege ferenda* proposals to address shortcomings where appropriate.

Attention is also paid to the topics related to EIA currently discussed in the national, European and international fields, such as the streamlining trends which aim to enhance the quality and efficiency of the decision-making process, including the possible joining of environmental impact assessment procedures required by different EU legislation. The thesis also deals with the issues of compliance of Czech legislation with EU law, regarding ongoing infringement proceedings on the implementation of the EIA Directive in the Czech Republic. The thesis mentions also the current developments at the international level, in particular the application of the Espoo Convention to nuclear energy-related activities. In conclusion, the thesis provides for an overall assessment of the existing legislation and a summary of the currently discussed topics.

Key words: environmental impact assessment, EIA directive, Espoo Convention