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Biography

Margaret Watson is the Academic Services Librarian in the Bodleian Law Library, Oxford. She has worked in the field of EU information for over 25 years, starting out as the EDC Librarian at the University of Exeter in 1983. She then worked for nearly ten years in the City of London, where she was responsible for monitoring EU information in the Brussels and London offices of law firm Lovell, White & King (subsequently Lovell White Durrant). She joined the Bodleian Library in 1996, and was put in charge of the University of Oxford EDC when she took up her present post, in 2001.

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Brexit Projects at Middle Temple Library

Abstract: This article, written by Lenka Geidt, gives detailed insight into Brexit projects undertaken by Middle Temple Library. The library specialises, among other areas, in European Union law. This article explains how members of the Inns of Court and librarians can benefit from these projects which focus on legislation, case law and the legal debate regarding the United Kingdom's referendum on European Union membership and Brexit.
Keywords: websites; web links; Middle Temple Library; Brexit; European Union

INTRODUCTION

Middle Temple Library is one of the libraries of the four Inns of Court. The Inns of Court, including Middle Temple, occupy a unique position in the legal world as they are the bodies which call men and women to the English Bar as barristers. The library contributes to supporting its members throughout their professional careers; therefore, its user base is quite wide – ranging from students and pupils through to practising barristers and judges. The library is also used by chambers' clerks and librarians.

As all four libraries are located close to each other geographically, it would not make sense to duplicate collections; therefore, a system is in place which determines the areas of law and jurisdictions in which each Inn library should specialise. Whereas Lincoln's Inn shares a specialism in Commonwealth countries with Inner Temple, Gray's Inn is known for its collections of international and human rights law. Middle Temple brings

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together printed and electronic resources for American and European Union law.[1]

This means that, as soon as the results of the United Kingdom referendum on the European Union membership were published in the early morning on Friday 24 June 2016, questions about one of our specialisms started arising. How will it affect the Middle Temple European collection? What could we do as a library to help our members in what will inevitably be uncertain times? It soon became clear that the referendum and the United Kingdom's likely departure from the European Union would have a profound impact, and especially on the legal world. Before describing what the Library staff has done to respond to Brexit, it is worth understanding the background to the Middle Temple European collection and how it has developed to the present day.

EUROPEAN LAW AT MIDDLE TEMPLE LIBRARY

It has been exactly 45 years since the idea emerged to create a collection of what was at the time known as European Community law. In February 1972, Lord Diplock prepared a memorandum on the cost and scope of a desirable collection of Community law to be set up in one of the Inns of Court following the United Kingdom's accession to the Common Market. The plan was approved a month later by the Treasurers of the four Inns. The original idea was for it to be housed at and maintained by Inner Temple, but for reasons of space it came to Middle Temple instead.

According to the memorandum, the collection was supposed to include Community publications as well as basic material on the internal law of member states. The final list of textbooks, law reports and periodicals was drawn up based on a bibliography of essential materials provided by the director of the library of the European Court of Justice and after consulting the librarian of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies and other experts in European law. Even though it was originally thought that foreign materials should be limited because of language difficulties, a number of French, German, Italian and Dutch books were acquired.[2]

The current European law collection contains over 7,000 volumes of various materials including textbooks, loose-leafs and serials. Apart from around 450 current textbooks, the Library has also retained hundreds of old textbooks as well as earlier editions and ceased publications. In addition, the library collects dictionaries focusing mostly on legal terminology in the languages of member states, the number of which has increased from nine after the United Kingdom, Denmark and Ireland joined in 1973 to 28 in 2013 when Croatia entered the Union. All materials purchased nowadays are in English except for two periodicals, one of which is in French and the other in German.

THE WAY TOWARDS BREXIT

The result of the June referendum came as a surprise to many and it has brought with it considerable uncertainty in relation to how the law in the United Kingdom will change after Brexit. The topic has been widely and extensively discussed in the news, in specialised reports of various representative legal bodies, in legal publications, online projects, blogs and social media. Numerous events dedicated to the legal side of Brexit have been held. New legal textbooks and specific chapters dealing with Brexit are being written and published.

Although the process of leaving the European Union after triggering Article 50 is supposed to take only two years, the consequences of this decision will inevitably last much longer. Many members of Middle Temple have been and will probably continue to be directly or indirectly impacted by the referendum result or the issues that will arise once the United Kingdom has left the bloc. Some of them work as politicians, or as legal advisors to the Government, some gave evidence to the Select Committees on issues related to Brexit. Others advise clients with regards to their rights as European Union citizens, on how to obtain British citizenship, or on British nationals' ownership of land and property in other European countries, as well as business-related issues.

That is one of the reasons why it is appropriate for Middle Temple Library, which falls under the Middle Temple Membership department, to monitor developments closely and assist its members. The collection development direction for the European collection has already changed. We are trying to focus more on topics and areas which may be of significant interest both during the negotiations and after Brexit. In order for the library to make appropriate decisions on stock, it is necessary to be familiar with the latest news regarding Brexit, be aware of the latest articles in legal journals and cooperate directly with our members.

Many online projects focusing on either the referendum itself or on wider Brexit issues have suddenly emerged. The numbers of such projects continue to increase. Of the Brexit projects undertaken by libraries, one of the most significant is arguably the Legal Deposit UK Web Archive, led by curators at the Bodleian Libraries. The project consists of collecting websites to "capture the 'Brexit' debate and the debate around the EU referendum as well as the wider context of UK/EU relations".[3]

While planning what project our library might develop after the referendum, it was clear that it needed to be something that would capture the legal side of the pre-referendum and Brexit debate. As soon as possible, I started collecting various relevant materials. However, the biggest challenge was to select the platform which could be used to present them. I discussed the problem with the Training and Development Librarian Adam Woellhaf. After considering the pros and cons of numerous options, we decided to create a set of electronic

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links which would be published on our website and updated regularly.

WHY ELECTRONIC LINKS?

There were several reasons as to why we agreed that electronic links would be the best solution for our project. Firstly, there already is a 'Links for Lawyers' section on the Middle Temple Library website. The section containing a selection of free legal websites was originally created for barristers, pupils and students conducting electronic legal research. The links are divided by jurisdictions, practice areas, and one subsection is dedicated to legal apps. This meant that we did not need to use a completely new platform, which saved a considerable amount of time. By choosing the form of electronic links to present the information, we were also able to continue using a format with which our members are familiar.

Secondly, electronic links are easy to publish on the website and can be amended whenever required. From a technical point of view, it does not take long to create a well-arranged list of links with brief descriptions according to different categories. New links can be added as soon as they are ready for publishing or deleted if they are no longer relevant or available. Additionally, the fact that the websites and documents are available online helps us save valuable space as we do not need to store the materials ourselves. Moreover, the links free us from dealing with any potential copyright issues.

Thirdly, creating a list of electronic links also saves time. There is no need to print numerous documents and catalogue them. In a small team such as ours, it is not possible to take on a large-scale project. Currently, I am responsible for monitoring developments regarding Brexit and for preparing new links. I also produce brief descriptions and edit links that are already listed. While I identified most of the websites and documents contained in the list, some links were also suggested by colleagues and other Inn members. The Training and Development Librarian then proofreads and edits the text if necessary, and publishes the new content on the website.

The final reason for such an approach was the issue of cost. Although putting the links list together and maintaining it takes time, there are no other monetary costs to the Library beyond staff time. As a result, Middle Temple Library has been able to provide a unique Brexit resource without any additional expenditure.

However, using electronic links has some significant drawbacks. The links need to be regularly checked in order to see whether they still function. A website or a document to which a link directs can be deleted. Online documents may also be amended and it may not be possible to obtain previous versions. In many instances it is possible to retrieve information from broken links and view previous versions of documents via digital archive platforms such as the Wayback Machine. Some links may initially be available free of charge but subsequently be placed behind a paywall or become subscription-based.

BREXIT LEGAL LINKS[4]

Electronic links are also a useful library tool in our fast-changing "information society", which uses online resources to obtain ever more information. However, therein may lie a problem, as John P. Feather reflected in his book *The Information Society*. "The very quantity of information which is now theoretically accessible is, paradoxically, making access to any specific piece of information more difficult. The web itself, one of the most potent and powerful products of the information revolution, gives access to so much data that it may be doubted whether any search can realistically expect to find all the relevant information which is available through it."[5]

I encountered a similar issue while looking for suitable resources for the Middle Temple Brexit legal links. The first challenge was to navigate the vast amount of information regarding the referendum and Brexit on the Internet. I did this by identifying online resources of interest to lawyers as well as using simple and advanced Google searches. Unfortunately, it is not possible to be certain whether searches on such a broad topic have identified all possibly relevant sources. Moreover, new resources on such a "hot topic" may appear at any time so it is necessary to check the Internet regularly.

The second challenge consisted in the varying quality of the Brexit legal coverage online. It was preferable to include links to websites or other digital platforms created by reputable individuals or bodies. Additionally, I looked for specific sections on Brexit from which continuous coverage could be expected. There have been exceptions to this; we have also provided links to some specific legal documents which are essential as part of the legal debate on Brexit. Examples will be mentioned later in this article. The overall aim was to create a single resource from which relevant Brexit legal coverage can be accessed.

The list we currently present on our website can be divided into three main categories – case law, legislation and legal commentary. The case law aspect seems relatively straightforward, especially as the cases related to the referendum and Brexit thus far have had a high profile and have been widely reported. However, it may become harder to track cases in the future, as there could be a great many and any of them could have major legal implications for individuals and companies.

The planned changes to legislation are already creating uncertainties across the legal profession. Legal commentator and journalist Joshua Rozenberg in one of his articles quoted Lord Judge, a Middle Temple member, former lord chief justice and now a legislator, that: 'Taking the UK out of the EU poses the greatest challenge ever faced by our legislative process'. In the same article, Rozenberg also discussed the possibility of introducing

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the so-called Great Repeal Bill, repealing the European Communities Act 1972 and 'converting the body of existing EU law into domestic law'. As he pointed out, even if all this happens, some areas such as customs and immigration law will need to change on the day the United Kingdom is scheduled to leave the European Union – 29 March 2019. This shows how complex changes to legislation may be and why it is important to be aware of developments.[6]

In terms of legal commentary, there is already a large pool of resources which provide such content. It was logical to start by looking at the Brexit coverage produced by official legal bodies for lawyers – The Bar Council and The Law Society. Both institutions were proactive both during the referendum as well as since the Brexit process was initiated. The Bar Council set up the Brexit Working Group to 'examine the range of complex issues arising from Brexit and to help the Government identify the legal and constitutional priorities'.[7] In December 2016, this group – led by Hugh Mercer QC, another Middle Temple member – published *The Brexit Papers*, a set of 15 papers identifying various legal issues of importance to the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the bloc. A second edition of these Papers appeared just three months later, which illustrates the fast pace of events.[8] The Law Society not only published its report called *Brexit and the Law*[9] in January 2017 but also created a specific section within its website which provides regularly updated information, advice and insight for solicitors.[10]

Commentary provided by barristers in the form of blogs has proved to be a useful resource. Several specialised Brexit blogs and Brexit sections or posts within existing blogs were launched or published immediately after the referendum. This was mostly to meet the needs of clients including policy makers and companies. However, as free platforms, they are also available to members of the public and therefore have the potential to shape the legal discussion around Brexit.[11] Some chambers produced specialised reports and analyses on specific topics.[12] Similarly, various law firms published their own Brexit blogs and analyses.[13]

Although we narrowed our remit to legal materials, the political aspects of Brexit cannot be completely omitted as the political and legal spheres are closely intertwined. Therefore, we also included useful websites of governmental and parliamentary bodies as well as their research services. Alongside the parliament and government of the United Kingdom, I also researched the Brexit activities of the devolved parliaments and assemblies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and added relevant links to our list. I included a section on Ireland due to the significant impact which Brexit may have on the country, taking into account that Ireland will continue to be the only European Union country to share a land border with the United Kingdom after Brexit. The historically complicated relations with Northern Ireland were also a factor in this decision.

While Brexit is about the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union, it is also important to view the topic from the other, European side. Until Prime Minister Theresa May triggered Article 50 on 29 March 2017, the bloc had published only a few Brexit-related documents. Generally, the European Union's public contribution had consisted of occasional statements and remarks. Since March, however, various official statements, documents and negotiation guidelines have been published.

For the purpose of the links, we have divided the European Union into three categories based on its main institutions: the European Parliament, the European Council and the European Commission. The European Parliament has its own Brexit site which looks at the impact of Brexit and its consequences.[14] The European Council introduced a tracker of events related to Brexit, which starts with the United Kingdom referendum.[15] Finally, the European Commission set up a department which is responsible for preparing and conducting the negotiations with the United Kingdom called 'Taskforce on Article 50 negotiations with the United Kingdom'.[16]

Besides the links mentioned above, we also added a number of specialist Europe-focused news resources, which may not be well-known in the United Kingdom but might be useful for anyone interested in news relating to the European Union. With particular regard to Brexit, the Brexit Files provided by political news website Politico are an excellent source for keeping up-to-date with Brexit current awareness.[17] We have also incorporated Brexit resources provided by universities and libraries as well as a section on various other resources including blogs, law associations, think tanks, societies and initiatives.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, updating the Brexit links is a time-consuming activity. It is essential to follow the latest Brexit developments as well as the legal debate in legal journals and on social media. Nevertheless, there are ways of how to make the process more efficient. For example, I have signed up to updates, digests and newsletters issued by many of the websites to which the list links. In this way, new material is sent directly to my email inbox, meaning that I do not need to search for it myself and check selected websites daily. Some of the resources also offer the option of sending alerts by RSS feed.

OTHER BREXIT PROJECTS

As the topic of Brexit is so broad, we have decided to undertake two other, smaller projects alongside the Brexit legal links.

As part of my responsibilities, I read articles on Brexit in legal journals which the Library holds in print. This can be useful not only for tracking the legal debate on Brexit but also for identifying new resources and to better understand how our members are involved in the topic. Therefore, I started to create a list of these

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articles, and it later became the 'Brexit Bibliography' which we have also made available via the Middle Temple website.[18]

We are aware that large legal databases provide access to a wide range of journal articles on the topic. However, their holdings are also limited, meaning that a user is unable to access all relevant materials on any given topic from a single source. By creating the Middle Temple Library Brexit Bibliography, we can provide our members with a list of available literature in the Library. Additionally, through being aware of current legal Brexit discourse, we can shape decisions on our holdings.

The third Brexit project which we decided to introduce was a list of Brexit legal-themed events.[19] At the beginning of this project, I cooperated with the Senior Library Assistant Patrick Ghirardello. We looked across the United Kingdom as well as Ireland as our members do not practice only in London. Bearing this in mind, it seemed logical to produce a simple resource on upcoming events. At the time of writing this article, we monitor around 60 websites for this purpose. The Brexit events links are updated on a weekly basis.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

The Training and Development Librarian has been responsible for promoting the Middle Temple Library Brexit resources. He has done this in a number of ways, such as by sharing the links with other information professionals on various legal information email list-servs. The reactions we have received from all around the world are encouraging. The Brexit legal links were re-tweeted several times, they were used during a taught session for LSE students and university staff, and they even became the Online Bibliographic Services section of the American Association of Law Libraries' website of the month.[20] However, we are aware that the work has only just begun.

The plan for now is to continue closely monitoring developments and regularly update our current links. As more links are created and become available, the challenge is how to manage and present them in a useful and efficient way. One option might be to create individual subcategories. I am also considering a section on our new library blog which would be dedicated to Brexit. We could, for example, introduce selected regular Brexit legal highlights which would be linked to the existing Brexit project as well as social media. We are also looking at producing a separate online platform to work as a dedicated gateway to legal-related Brexit resources online. Furthermore, an idea will be discussed to create a separate Brexit textbook collection.

It is impossible to say at the moment for how long these Brexit-focused projects will be relevant. However, we can assume that the impact of the whole process of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union will be considerable. It will be interesting to see how legislation will evolve and what kind of cases will be brought to courts on the both sides of the Channel. There is no doubt that the Middle Temple Library's own European collection will be affected by Brexit. Nonetheless, European Union law will not disappear, and so the collection will still retain its relevance, although its purpose and management will change. The more effort we put into following and understanding the Brexit process, the better we should be able to predict the needs of legal professionals for printed and electronic resources. *Scientia potentia est.*

Footnotes

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[6] Joshua Rozenberg, 'A parachute that works. Brexit poses a huge challenge to our legislative process – lawlessness must be avoided at all costs' [15 May 2017] L. S. G. 10.

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[10] Brexit and legal sector (The Law Society) <http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/support-services/brexit-and-the-legal-sector/> accessed 1 June 2017.

[11] More on The Bar's Brexit blogs: 'The Bar's Brexit blogs' (January 2017) *Counsel* 40.

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[12] For example: 'Brexit: children's rights at risk or future opportunity in the global era?' (Coram, February 2017) <http://www.coram.org.uk/sites/default/files/resource_files/FINALCoram%20commentary%20on%20Brexit%20and%20the%20rights%20of%20children1702%20%281%29.pdf> accessed 1 June 2017.
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[14] Brexit (European Parliament) <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/priorities/20160701TST34439> accessed 1 June 2017.
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Biography

Lenka Geidt has been working at Middle Temple Library since 2012. She currently holds the role of Assistant Librarian with responsibility for the European collection, official publications and serials.

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CURRENT ISSUES

Legal Research Training at Middle Temple Library

Abstract: This article, written by Adam Woellhaf, describes the legal research training offered by Middle Temple Library to Inns of Court members. It examines the challenges of designing and delivering legal research training to practitioners, as well as offering guidance and advice to others in their own legal research training efforts. It also looks at the potential for using mobile technology in legal research instruction.
Keywords: training; legal research

INTRODUCTION

Middle Temple is one of the four Inns of Court which have exclusive right to call members to the Bar. It is a professional society and membership organisation which educates and trains barristers, and provides a modern law library to members of all four Inns of Court.

Inns of Court members comprise a diverse group of people at any stage of their career, and all are welcome to use the Middle Temple Library:

- Students, mainly those studying for their Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC) but also the Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL)
- Pupils – which is the on-the-job training for barristers – this could be within a set of chambers or an organisation as part of the employed Bar
- New practitioners – those who have completed their year-long pupillage and who are practising in a set of

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