

EUIJ Internship Report

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From the end of June 2006 until early September, I had an opportunity to stay as a visiting intern at International Security Information Service, Europe (ISIS Europe). This article will focus on ISIS Europe and my experience throughout the two months stay at Brussels.

ISIS Europe

ISIS Europe is an independent research organization, where policy inputs and researches on EU related issues are major parts of its activity. There is a news review called The European Security Review, which is based on the analysis of developments in European Defense and Security Policy (ESDP). Also, there are other publications and international conferences based on the study results. The policy inputs of the ISIS Europe are supported by the research activities that are included in following three programs: institutional reforms of EU and NATO, response to the violent conflict, and disarmament.

The office is located near the EU central institutions such as European Commission, the Council Secretariat, and the European Parliament. During last summer, vacation period, there are two researchers under the Executive Director Dr. Stephen Pullinger, and they each work on the three programs. Their research results would be updated on the institution homepage, and distributed to the EU-related organizations. I worked as an assistant to each of the members. Through listening to staff meetings and information exchange by researchers, I was able to grasp the institutional situation and the direction it is facing.

Activities and Experiences

There were many international conferences on various topics during June and July at Brussels. As an intern, I was able to attend those that related to my senior thesis topic, which is about EU policy towards Western Balkans. There were discussions by professionals as well as European Parliament member and opportunities to exchange opinions among the participants. I was able to obtain rich information that is impossible to gain from just by reading articles.

During the vacation, I was able to focus on my thesis research. At the same time I had chance to help with preparation for Panel Discussion, which took place in mid-September. This opportunity helped me understand how the institutions work and how conferences were set up.

The nine-week stay at Brussels was short but very meaningful experience for my research as well as my life. By living and working close to the EU institutions, I was able to feel and analyze better the situations occurring in the EU area, thus leading to deeper understanding on EU itself and Western Balkans countries. To understand the changing EU situations on the daily basis, I experienced it is better to be around that situation. Especially during this summer there were major incidents such as Israel-Lebanon conflict, Iran problem on nuclear development, and prevention on London terrorism, and I was able to see how EU acted towards these problems. For that, I believe that I was able to obtain more information than I would gain in Japan.

Lastly, I would like to thank EUIJ scholarship from bottom of my heart, for this opportunity as an intern would never have come into reality without its assistance.