



Dear reader,

The fact that you are holding in your hands the 15th edition of *Juridica International* demonstrates the viability of the law journal of the University of Tartu and the success of the endeavour that started in 1996. The fastidious prior review of contributions has justified itself; over the years, our publication has become a highly valued channel for Estonian jurists for taking their research to the international arena. To our delight, foreign colleagues are publishing their articles in the journal with increasing frequency.

The general subject of this edition is “Estonia in the European Union: Creation and Implementation of New Laws”. The Republic of Estonia, which is celebrating its 90th anniversary, has had to repeatedly prove itself when restoring independence and building up statehood. Membership in the European Union since 2004 finalised Estonia’s formal return to where it really belongs — the family of Western democracies. Effective affiliation with the European cultural and legal area and the Europeanization of various areas of life is an ongoing process. The development of Estonian law to meet European standards requires continued efforts from our jurists and lawyers. This is a great and common task composed of the contributions of many persons in their respective specific fields, which eventually takes forward not only Estonian, but also European Union law.

The articles in this edition cover a wide range of topics, all of which are integrally related to the newest developments in the Estonian legal sphere. The first group of articles (by Hannes Veinla, Lasse Lehis, Inga Klauson, Helen Pahapill, Erki Uustalu, Merle Muda) are dedicated to the introduction of the principles of European Union directives into Estonian environmental law, tax law and labour law. The next group of articles relate to the harmonisation of private law in the European Union Member States and Estonian company law (authors Karin Sein, Mari Ann Simovart, Kalev Saare, Kadri Siibak, Age Värvi, Luboš Tichý, Margit Vutt, Andres Vutt). The group of articles focusing on specific branches of law deal with Estonian economic law, copyright law, procedural law, criminal law, and legal sociology (authors Katri Paas, Aleksei Kelli, Anneli Alekand, Paavo Randma, Silvia Kaugia). The edition closes with articles about the contacts between Estonian and international law in the context of the events of April 2007, as well as about the history of Baltic law and about Estonian legal terminology (authors René Värk, Arnold Sinisalu, Hesi Siimets-Gross, Merike Ristikivi). The pervading idea of all the articles is to identify how the various areas of law continue to transfer from totalitarian to democratic and in which direction international law is developing. Most of the articles reflect how the specific Estonian conditions have been taken into account in the general European Union framework of implementation of legislation and law.

The relationship between law and real life is like walking on two feet, because one can steadily move in a certain direction only when both feet work in synchrony. It is not always important whether the law or reality takes the first step; it is important to have a steady orientation. And, of course, one foot should not push too far ahead when the other is faltering, as that would mean moving in a circle. This gives the impression of speed without any actual progress. Hopefully the articles in this edition of *Juridica International* demonstrate convincingly that Estonian law and real life are developing in good harmony and following the same direction, and that nobody has to worry about the clarity of the goals.

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