



Dear reader,

This year's *Juridica International* compendium offers articles on a wide variety of topics. From an initial glance, the problems tackled in those articles might not seem to have so much in common. Yet, even though offering windows to several quite distinct cross-sections of legal scholarship, many of the pieces, upon a closer look, reveal themselves to be very much interrelated. One notices that most of them share a theme of concern arising from crises in society that have recently come to a head, with a leitmotif of concern for the future and of venturing into unknowns – a backdrop so familiar to us these days' that we might not even recognise its peculiarity.

Contemporary times are marked by complex global developments such as the pandemic, the ongoing wars in Ukraine and of Israel/Hamas, a still very much unwritten future of AI influencing all aspects of life, etc. In times such as these, the law assumes a critical role in shaping not only our current doings but the course of human affairs far further down the line as well.

The corresponding concern for our global future can be characterised as underpinning this edition from its very first article, a paper whereby Astrid Stadler calls on the courts to save the climate. The same focus could be ascribed to the examination of sensitive health data's application as presented from research by Maret Kruus and the analysis penned by Kai Härmand examining AI's impact on judicial action. Their scholarship silently invites us to ponder the profound influence that the judiciary and the legislature can have on the future. Furthermore, the need to accommodate in the manner most beneficial for society and for every individual alike seems to give significant impetus for such research. The article by Jānis Neimanis on recent Latvian Constitutional Court case-law reflects concerns of a similar nature, via illustrations from the response to SARS-CoV-2, empowerment of marginalised groups, and protection of democracy.

While the work of Neimanis demonstrates how legal response may manifest a balancing act between individuals' rights and the broader public good, other pandemic-related articles analyse the angle of palliative efforts by national legislators or simply struggles for efficiency within the complicated field of public procurement in crisis-ridden times. The piece by Şimal Efsane Erdoğan and Oana Ştefan and that by Raquel Carvalho, in turn, allow us to compare national reactions in this regard. I am immensely pleased to note that these articles reflect fruitful discussion of public procurement in times of crisis from a highly successful conference held on this topic at the University of Tartu's School of law last January.

Finally but surely not least, I stress that I in no way wish to underestimate articles that, by dealing with somewhat more stability-rooted aspects of jurisprudence, are centred less on crises or struggles. Age Värvi writing about the role of foreign sources in Estonian case-law; Aleksei Kelli, Margus Pedaste, and Äli Leijen providing a most interesting empirical view of the so-called education exception to copyright (a subject every academic certainly has come in contact with); the analysis Eneli Laurits provides of protecting privacy in certain criminal investigations; eyewitness identification as revisited comprehensively by Annegrete Palu and Anneli Soo; and, finally, the description of a 'super-judge' safeguarding such realms, by Julia Laffranque, offer plenty of hearty food for legal thought.

I extend my warmest thanks to all of the authors for addressing these difficult topics, thus advancing legal scholarship and, through their contribution, serving the common good.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MAS'.

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