

Digital Revolution - New Challenges for Law

De Franceschi / Schulze

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Digital Revolution – New Challenges for Law



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Digital Revolution – New Challenges for Law

Data Protection, Artificial Intelligence,
Smart Products, Blockchain Technology
and Virtual Currencies

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Preface

The European Law Institute (ELI), founded in 2011 as an entirely independent organisation, aims to improve the quality of European law and to contribute to the formation of a more vigorous European legal community. It seeks to provide a forum, for discussion and cooperation, of jurists irrespective of their vocation or occupation, inter alia academics, judges, lawyers and other legal professionals from all over Europe and beyond, who take an active interest in European legal development. In its project work, the ELI seeks to initiate, conduct and facilitate research, to make recommendations, and to provide practical guidance in the field of European legal development. This often involves the exploration of yet uncharted legal territories, such as the many legal issues raised by new digital technologies.

While the ELI as such covers all areas of the law, it was decided in 2015 to also establish Special Interest Groups (SIGs), which are topic-specific working groups established for ELI Members to facilitate discussion, share and monitor legal developments, and stimulate project proposals. As such, they are of fundamental importance to the ELI's success, being the breeding ground for fresh ideas and new ELI projects and allowing ELI Members and experts outside the ELI as well as stakeholders, including EU institutions, to engage in an intensive discussion in a particular focus area.

Given the potential of digitalisation to completely change the way our societies and economies function and given the need to submit every part of our law to a 'digital fitness check', the ELI's Digital Law SIG was among the first SIGs to be established. With Alberto De Franceschi and Reiner Schulze as Chairs, the ELI Digital Law SIG has since 2015 been at the forefront of legal discussion on digital issues in Europe. This discussion has often revealed a need to review, and sometimes to completely rethink, important parts of our law, and several ELI projects on topics related to the challenges of digitalisation launched in recent years have originated from the work of the ELI Digital Law SIG.

The ELI is extremely grateful to the Chairs of the ELI Digital Law SIG for having also organised, together with a group of colleagues, a conference that took place in Mogliano Veneto, Italy, on 19 and 20 April 2018. The papers that were given at that conference are published in this volume. The conference was a landmark event, encouraging Europe's 'digital legal community', including a number of representatives from EU institutions and national governments which convened at Villa Braidà, to discuss in depth current issues and the challenges posed by the digital revolution and which legislators, courts and academics may need to address. Some of the papers given and discussions held at Villa Braidà have already triggered further developments at European and national level.

On behalf of the ELI, I would like to warmly thank Alberto De Franceschi, Reiner Schulze as well as Christoph Busch that took over as Chair from Schulze in spring 2018, for their commitment as ELI SIG Chairs and to congratulate them on this great success.

Vienna, July 2019

Christiane Wendehorst, ELI President


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