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Erasmus Intensive Course – Law Faculty of Lisbon University

Introduction to European Private Law - From national rules on Contract and Tort to supranational European Union Obligation Law

Course syllabus

Class 1

Introduction: Differences of national private laws in Europe; Legal families; Selected examples from Common Law and Civil Law; Problems of diverging legal rules within the EU (hindrance to the internal market)

Class 2

Harmonisation of Private Law: Competences of the EU in general (types, exercise); Competences executed (to harmonise legal rules); Instruments of EU-law (Directives; Regulations)

Class 3

Traditional European Contract Law: Harmonization by Directives (Contracts, national and international civil procedure, corporations, conflict of laws); Example: Unfair Contract Terms Directive 93/13/EEC / Sale of Goods Directive EU/2019/771

Class 4

A new Strategy: Development, format and functions of the (Draft) Common Frame of Reference (DCFR); Structure and contents of the DCFR; the Four Basic Principles and the General Part of the DCFR; Further concepts: Proposal of a Common European Sales Law (CESL) / Revival: Two newer Directives (on Contracts for Sales of Goods EU 2019/771 and Contracts for the Supply of Digital Content EU 2019/770)

Class 5

Unified EU Principles on Contracts and Tort: DCFR Book IV.A “Sales” and Proposal of Common European Sales Law (CESL) compared to CISG; Principles of European Tort Law (PETL) vs. DCFR Book VI “Noncontractual liability arising out of damage caused to another“

Reading List

Articles

- Hesselink, The Common Frame of Reference as a Source of European Private Law, 83/4 Tulane Law Review (2008) https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1270
- Johnston/Unberath, European private law by directives: Approach and challenges, in: Twigg-Flesner (Ed), European Union Private Law (2010), Ch. 7
- Loos, Standard Contract Terms Regulation in the Proposal for a Common European Sales Law, Zeitschrift für Europäisches Privatrecht (ZEuP) 2012 (4), pp. 776-796
https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2081857
- Manko, EU Competence in Private Law: The Treaty Framework for a European Private Law and Challenges for Coherence, Brussels: European Parliamentary Research Service, 2015
https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2553945
- Micklitz/Reich, The Commission Proposal for a “Regulation on a Common European Sales Law (CESL)”
https://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/20485/LAW_2012_04_ERPL_03.pdf;sequence=3
- Quinn, The Shifting Landscape of European Company Law, Dublin European Law Institute 2026
[QUINN-DELI-WP-1-2026.pdf](#)
- Schulte-Nölke, The Objectives of Directive 93/13/EEC on Unfair Contract Terms: An Overview after 30 Years of Case Law, European Review of Private Law (EPRL) 2024, 315

Books (Additional Reading)

- Alpa/Andenas, European Private Law (2022)
- Bartl/Burgers/Mak (Eds.), Uncovering European Private Law (2025)
- Basedow, EU private law: anatomy of a growing legal order (2021)
- Bussani/Werro (Eds), European Private Law: A Handbook Vol I (2009) / Vol. II (2014)
- Duriovic/Tridimas (Eds.), New directions in European private law (2021)
- Hartkamp/Sieburgh/Devroe (Eds.), Cases, Materials and Texts on European Law and Private Law (2017)
- Janssen/Lehmann/Schulze (Eds.), The Future of European Private Law (2023)
- Mak, Legal pluralism in European private law (2020)
- Moccia (Ed), The making of European private law: why, how, what, who (2013)
- Reich, General Principles of EU Civil Law (2017)
- Schulze / Schulte-Nölke (Eds.), European Private Law – Current Status and Perspective (2011)
- Sammut, Constructing Modern European Private Law: A Hybrid System (2016)
- Twigg-Flesner (Ed), European Union Private Law (2010)
- Vranken, Fundamentals of European Civil Law, 2nd ed. (2010)
- Howells/Twigg-Flesner/Wilhelmsson, Rethinking EU Consumer Law (2018)
- Reich/Micklitz/Rott/Tonner, European Consumer Law, 2nd ed (2014)
- Schulte-Nölke/Tichy (Eds), Perspectives for European Consumer Law - Towards a Directive on Consumer Rights ... (2010)
- Schulze / Arroyo Amayuelas (Eds.), EU Consumer Law – Article-by Article-Commentary (2026)
- Antoniolli/Fiorentini (Eds), A factual assessment of the draft common frame of reference (2011)
- Hartkamp/Hondius e.a. (Eds), Towards a European civil code, 4th ed. (2011)
- Larouche (Ed), Economic analysis of the DCFR - The work of the Economic Impact Group (2010)
- Micklitz/Cafaggi (Eds), European Private Law after the Common Frame of Reference (2010)
- Sagaert/Storme/Terryn (Eds), The Draft Common Frame of Reference: national and comparative perspectives (2013)
- Schulze (Ed.), Common Frame of Reference and Existing EC Contract Law, 2nd ed. (2009)
- De Luca, European Company Law, 2nd ed. (2021)
- Koziol, Harmonisation and fundamental questions of European Tort Law (2017)
- Schulze / Zoll, European Contract Law³ (2021)
- Calvo Caravaca / Carrascosa Gonzáles (Eds.), European Private International Law, 2nd ed. (2024)
- Van Calster, European Private International Law, 4th ed. (2024)