

Ernst Karner and Barbara C Steininger (eds)
European Tort Law 2019

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European Tort Law 2019

Ernst Karner
Barbara C Steininger (eds)

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To the memory of
Pierre Widmer

Preface

Published jointly by the European Centre of Tort and Insurance Law (ECTIL) and the Institute for European Tort Law (ETL), this Yearbook provides information and analysis about tort law developments in Europe in 2019. It includes reports from most EU Member States, plus Norway and Switzerland, and an overview of developments in the field of EU law. Moreover, it contains a report on developments in Israeli tort law. In conclusion a comparative analysis evaluates selected highlights and identifies emerging trends.

The Yearbook is associated with the Annual Conference on European Tort Law, which is held each year in Vienna in the week after Easter. The 19th Annual Conference, including presentations on some of the developments addressed more fully in these pages, should have taken place in Vienna from 16 to 18 April 2020. Due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, we found ourselves compelled to cancel the event. We are, however, very happy to be able to present the full reports from all jurisdictions involved in the current Yearbook. The 20th Annual Conference is scheduled for 7 to 9 April 2021. After this year's cancellation, we want to make sure that the next Conference will definitely take place next year – whether in ‘real life’, or in the digital sphere, or a mix of the two, remains to be seen. Papers from the themed Saturday morning session of the Conference appear each year in a special issue of the *Journal of European Tort Law*. In 2020, the theme was ‘Liability for Emerging Digital Technologies’. While the presentations themselves fell prey to the pandemic, the papers can be found in vol 11 no 2 of the *Journal*.

Projects like the present Yearbook require multifarious support. While this is always the case, it is particularly true in difficult times. We would therefore like to take the opportunity to express our sincere gratitude not only to our sponsors – the Austrian Ministry of Justice and the Supreme Court of Justice of the Republic of Austria – but also to all contributors to this volume, who provided their reports notwithstanding the difficulties they were facing due to the pandemic. Moreover, we would like to thank our colleagues on the ECTIL-ETL staff for their help with the project in myriad ways. Special thanks go to Lisa Zeiler for organising the Conference, Donna Stockenhuber for once again taking on the delicate and time-consuming task of proof-reading the entire manuscript, Kathrin Karner-Strobach for copy-editing, Alexander Longin for formatting, Julian Pehm for his support in technical and layout questions and David Messner for compiling the Index.

Shortly after this year's Conference should have taken place, Pierre Widmer passed away at the age of 82. Pierre Widmer was actively involved in both the

Yearbook and the Conference ever since their beginning in 2002. For years he acted as chairman at the Conference and guided us through the presentations with impressive insight and humour. In later years, he continued to enrich the event with his questions and comments and again his sense of humour. Yearbook contributors and ECTIL-ETL staff members alike are deeply saddened by his death. Our tort law family has lost a dear and most esteemed member and a brilliant scholar. We would like to dedicate this volume of the Yearbook to his memory.

Ernst Karner
Barbara C Steininger
Vienna, July 2020

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