

Editorial

The first issue of the 2018 volume of the *Review of European Administrative Law* includes five different and innovative contributions, ranging from the analysis of the influence of European law on immigration law, the protection of fundamental rights, soft law to the role of the EU ombudsman.

The issue starts with two articles on the principles of EU administrative law and fundamental rights. In the article 'The Long Road to Strasbourg', Professor José M. Cortés-Martin explores the meaning of the principle of mutual trust in light of recent case law of the European Court of Human Rights ('ECtHR') and the Court of Justice of the European Union ('CJEU'). This thorough article offers an analysis of the case law in the area of freedom, justice and security. In this article, Professor Cortés-Martin argues that the case law from both institutions might have more in common than existing scholarship has posited. The article also invites the readers to reflect upon the broader meaning of the principle of mutual trust.

The article 'The Limited Scope for Accepting Positive Obligations Under EU Law' offers a critical discussion of the development of positive obligations to protect fundamental rights under EU law. In this article, Malu Beijer discusses the CJEU case *X. and X. v. Belgium*. As Dr. Meijer explains, in this case the Court declined to accept the argument that the protection of refugees' fundamental rights imposes a positive obligation for EU Member States to issue humanitarian visas to ensure legal entry of Syrian refugees. As this article explains, the Court established in this case clear limits for the protection of fundamental rights under EU law. Nevertheless, as this article critically analyses, the Court also missed an opportunity to further existing case law on the development of positive obligations under EU law.

The third article of this issue takes us to the world of EU soft law, an increasingly important topic which this journal seeks to bring under the attention of our readers. The article 'EU Soft Law in the Hands of National Authorities' by Thomas Devine and Mariolina Eliantonio discusses the relevance of EU soft law in light of the principle of sincere cooperation. While soft law does not have recognized legally binding force, its practical importance is undeniable as it is present in almost every single EU policy area. In this article, Thomas Devine and Professor Eliantonio investigate how the Competition and Markets Authority (in the United Kingdom) take into account EU competition soft law in deciding cases before it.

This issue also includes two interesting book reviews. The first one by Dr. Yseult Marique reviews the new edition of *Comparative Administrative Law* edited by Susan Rose-Ackerman, Peter Lindseth and Blake Emerson and published in 2017 by Edward Elgar. In this book review, Dr. Marique describes not only the contents of this book but also the differences between the first and second edition. A number of contributions have been added to the first edition of the book and many others have been thoroughly revised. In this book review, readers will find an overview of the themes discussed in this edited collection

that has acquired a place in the bookshelves of most scholars of administrative law. Dr. Marique's review includes a reflection upon the history, development, and methodology of comparative administrative law. Furthermore, this review underlines that the first and second editions of this edited collection have performed a crucial role in the consolidation of the field of comparative administrative law. Dr. Marique concludes her review by stating that this book is 'an incredibly important stepping stone to framing administrative comparative law as a distinct field of research'.

The second book review by Richard Kirkham appraises the edited collection *Accountability in the EU: The Role of the European Ombudsman* edited by Herwig Hofmann and Jacques Ziller and published last year by Edward Elgar. Dr. Kirkham reviews the contributions of this edited collection that explains how the European Ombudsman adds value to the accountability network in the EU. Dr. Kirkham also poses questions regarding missing pieces of the puzzle that could have expanded the contribution of this edited collection. As Dr. Kirkham suggests, future scholarship might further develop some of the lines of inquiry sketched in this valuable edited collection and devote additional attention to the role of national ombudsman institutions.

With this editorial, we would also like to underline some editorial changes and our commitment to continue improving the academic quality and impact of our journal. Firstly, the first issue of this volume introduces the new editorial board that since January 1st, 2018 also welcomes Professors Mariolina Eliantonio (Maastricht University) and Willemien den Ouden (Leiden University). Mariolina Eliantonio, as the responsible editor for book reviews, is happy to discuss any suggestions readers might have regarding recently published books on EU administrative law and comparative administrative law. Professor Eliantonio replaces Albertjan Tollenaar (University of Groningen) who fulfilled this role for a number of years. Secondly, we now also welcome contributions that focus not only on EU administrative law but that also include a stronger comparative component. The *Review of European Administrative Law* wishes to continue the debate on how EU law is reshaping national administrative law and how national legal orders and institutions can learn from each other. Each issue of this journal gives a small step towards the consolidation of the field of EU and comparative administrative law.

On behalf of the Editorial Board,

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