

Preface

The idea for this book arose during a conference of American Professors of Charity Law in Chicago, in late 2009. I was the only European scholar attending the conference. I became involved, and took up the challenge.

My idea started to take shape: getting together a collection of contributions by renowned authors on Foundation or Charity Law from different European countries. They would follow common guidelines, yet take a critical approach, depending on the extant situation in their own country. I asked the authors to describe Foundation Law as it exists today in their country, and to include remarks about the current situation, together with suggestions for changes, if needed.

Foundation Law is developing in several ways, for reasons that may differ per country. In Europe, for instance, in February 2012, the European Commission presented a proposal for a European Foundation Statute, in order to facilitate the cross-border activities of public benefit foundations.

The book considers countries whose territory is located entirely in Europe, with these countries being either member States, or non-member States of the EU. It includes three countries that suffered from totalitarian regimes until a few decades ago. For some countries, the lack of freedom did not allow the creation of foundations, and in these countries Foundation Law is still in its initial stages.

The book contains contributions related to the five European countries with the largest population, including one very small European state. The sum of the contributions covers territories with 400 million inhabitants.

As a whole, the book offers an intriguing description of the developments that Foundation Law has undergone in recent years and it offers several suggestions for the future.

Almost all authors finished their contributions by the end of 2011; a few asked to revise them afterwards.

I thank all the authors for their collaboration.

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Turin, Italy

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