This publication, born out of the co-operation between 41 universities in the 27 EU countries, is a commentary and a narrative from the national perspective concerning the reception and understanding of the UDHR in the legal and political order of each country on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In addition, the three European regional organisations (the Council of Europe, the European Union and the Organisation of Security and Co-operation in Europe) contribute to this unique book.

There is the experience of the original West European countries that created the Council of Europe and later became the European Union; the experience of countries which have been under dictatorship and managed to rid themselves of the yoke of authoritarian rule; the experience of the Central and East European countries that remained so long behind the so-called Iron Curtain, and the experience of a number of countries which were placed in a particular historical context in 1948. Each of these counties tells a different story about human rights and democratisation, but taken together, this is the European story of human rights and democratisation.

This book is unique also from the point of view that for the allusive reader it actually compiles a pool of normatively relevant empirical information, which is of interest both from the perspective of international law and comparative law. Consequently, the book raises intriguing issues about the binding nature of the UDHR in the domestic legal orders of different countries. However, it should be underlined that the point of departure in the book and in the articles it contains is not only legal, but also incorporates historical and political perspectives. Therefore, all countries and international organisations involved were able to find, from this multi-disciplinary perspective, a suitable methodological approach to the issues raised. The comparisons that can be made on the basis of the different contributions make it possible to state that from the perspective of today, the European story of human rights is one of diversity within the unity.
60 Years of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Europe

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