

V. Harsági and C.H. van Rhee (eds)

Multi-Party Redress Mechanisms in Europe: Squeaking Mice?

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A book series devoted to the common foundations of the European legal systems. The *Ius Commune Europaeum* series includes comparative legal studies as well as studies on the effect of treaties within national legal systems. All areas of the law are covered. The books are published in various European languages under the auspices of METRO, the Institute for Transnational Legal Research at Maastricht University.

The story of collective redress in the European Union up to the present day may be qualified as a story of missed opportunities and small steps forward. This is due to an overly cautious approach to the topic at the European and national levels, a fear of American-style class actions and lobbying against the introduction of such mechanisms by those who might become subject to them as defendant parties. As a result, many of the collective redress mechanisms introduced so far in the various EU Member States may rightly be qualified as 'Squeaking Mice'. This appears not only from the contributions to the present volume, but also from the considerable number of studies that have been published on collective redress mechanisms in Europe during the last few years.

The editors of the present volume hope that the future of collective redress in Europe will be brighter than the past. They hope that the volume will further the discussion on collective redress in Europe by providing the most up-to-date information in the field, and that this will lead to the implementation of effective collective redress mechanisms in the various EU Member States, mechanisms that cannot be qualified as stillborn, as is the case with many of the reforms that until now have been introduced in most European Union Member States.

IUS COMMUNE EUROPAEUM

ISBN 978-1-78068-277-8



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