



Dear reader,

This issue of our journal marks our tenth anniversary. I would like to first thank and congratulate all those involved in the publication of the journal, including the editors and members of the editorial board as well as the numerous authors for their indispensable and fruitful contributions. I am grateful also to our readers, whose continuing and growing interest has been the motivation and reason for publishing the journal. *Juridica International* has gained more and more readers every year; the content has also changed substantially over the journal's 10-year history. Although *Juridica International*, as the name says, is mainly intended for the international reader, its content also reflects the development of Estonian law and legal scientific thinking. Since 1996 when the first issue of *Juridica International* was published, Estonian law and legal science have developed rapidly and substantial changes have taken place. From the regaining of Estonia's independence in 1991 through the beginning of the 2000s, intensive work was carried out to create for the country a legal system of its own. It was natural that the articles published in the first issues of *Juridica International* were largely dedicated to legal drafting in Estonia; foreign readers were mainly introduced to issues that were topical from the standpoint of creating the new Estonian legal system.

Estonian legal drafting was significantly influenced by the country's new status as a member state of the European Union, which meant taking European Union law into account in the legal drafting process. There was no great need to harmonise Estonian laws with EU law after Estonia became an EU member state on 1 May 2004, as the harmonisation requirements had already been taken into account in preparing the acts previously adopted. The issues involved in accession to the EU, and the related legal harmonisation issues, have been considered for some time by *Juridica International* also, since the late 1990s. Compared to the earlier years of the journal — the second half of the 1990s — more recent issues have seen the content become more international; introduction of Estonian law is no longer in the foreground, and the journal contains more and more articles discussing the wider issues that are topical in Europe and elsewhere. This is a major change of direction — the journal's main task is no longer to introduce Estonian law to those abroad but to participate in the international discussion of important legal issues. Of course, the solutions offered and positions expressed in Estonian law and legal science are part of the analysis. Development of the content of *Juridica International* has also been greatly influenced by the fact that a greater number of internationally acclaimed jurists have contributed to our journal in recent years. This is a growing trend.

The tenth-jubilee issue of the journal is accompanied by the international conference 'European Legal Harmony: Goals and Milestones' to be held in Tartu on 6 December 2005, which will be dedicated to the tenth anniversary of *Juridica International*. The title of the conference is also the title of the tenth issue of the journal. The conference will focus on the further development of European private law and the issues involved in drafting a European civil code. The high international standard of the conference is illustrated by the fact that 10 other countries are represented among the speakers — Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden, the UK. The speakers include 11 members of the Study Group on a European Civil Code, headed by the chairman of the group, Professor Christian von Bar. This issue of *Juridica International* contains five articles based on speeches at the conference: the papers by Professor Christian von Bar (Germany), Professor Hugh Beale (UK), Professor Peter Schlechtriem (Germany), Professor Valentinas Mikelenas (Lithuania), and Professor Kaspars Balodis (Latvia). The presentations of all the other speakers will be published in *Juridica International* 2006.

We promise to our readers that *Juridical International* will continue to be interesting and worthwhile reading over the next 10 years and that the journal will continue to develop.

Paul Varul
Editor-in-Chief