FOREWORD

As the European Union is moving from an economic to a "political" constitution, one may ask what future there is for human rights protection in the Union. The Treaty on European Union for the first time includes treaty articles requiring the respect for human rights in the Union, but their potential is reduced to the extent that an involvement of an independent court to secure their respect is not guaranteed. What potential is there for improvement of the human rights protection in the European Union?

This book examines the human rights implications of the European Union in a forward-looking perspective. Seventeen experts from nine different countries inside and outside the Community have been asked to give their opinion on the potential for development in different spheres of activity of the Union. Is Maastricht a step forward in the protection of human rights? How does judicial protection under Union Law compare with standards of protection under the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, or with national constitutional law? Which rights, and whose rights are being protected?

These questions are to some extent underlying all the contributions to this book. Apart from the general reflective contributions a broad range of specific issues of particular topicality is dealt with, including property rights, the freedom of expression for commercial actors, the principle of governmental openness, the right to vote and to be elected, freedom of movement, social rights as general principles of Community law, workers' rights of participation, family rights and the position of women in the family, expulsion and extradition in and from the European Union, the protection of minorities, the protection of cultural heritage, foreign policy and extraterritoriality. A select bibliography on the topics dealt with is also included.

This publication is the result of collaboration between the Law Department of the University of Leicester, England, and the Department of Law and the Institute for Human Rights of Åbo Akademi University in Turku, Finland, where substantial research is at present being done both in the field of human rights and in the field of European Community law. The Law Department and the Institute for Human Rights jointly provided the infrastructure and the necessary financial support.

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The Editors