

Foreword

The launch of the European Law Institute is a remarkable event on many counts. The launch follows a long and carefully managed period of preparation. That preparation involved the talents – and hard work – of some of the leading figures in European law. (I hasten to add that I was not closely involved at that stage.) The process has generated a high degree of enthusiasm for the idea, reflected in the many expressions of interest and the large number of applications to join the Institute. The launch itself, at the Paris Congress on 1 June 2011, was attended by a galaxy of jurists from all parts of Europe and beyond. The Congress was addressed by leading personalities all of whom expressed strong support for the Institute. It seems very clear that the Institute fills a need: indeed one of the remarkable aspects is that it has not been created before.

The Institute has high ambitions, reflected in its Manifesto and in its Articles of Association. It seeks to study and stimulate European legal development in a global context. That should be taken to include, but by no means be limited to, the development of European law by the European Union and the Council of Europe. It will include other fields of national law. It may also include the development of international law, both public and private.

The scope of the Institute is broad, covering all branches of the law. Hitherto, most emphasis has perhaps been placed on developing European private law; there will certainly be a need for developing European public law also.

The Institute will be broad in its membership, bringing together scholars, practitioners and judges from the wider Europe. It is not intended for pure academic research, but rather to promote, on the basis of the best academic and practical experience available, law which will have a real impact in practice.

The Institute may also be active in the field of legal education, promoting the teaching of European law and international and comparative law, again with a practical perspective.

While the Institute has high ambitions, it should not of course be over-ambitious. It will have to demonstrate the quality of its work, and the legitimacy of its approach, especially in the results of its first projects. It must bring an added value to all that it undertakes.

The level of support which the Institute has already attained encourages me to believe that it will be equal to the challenges it faces. But we need continuing interest and continuing support from all those concerned with improving the quality of our legal environment. I urge you to support our work.

Sir Francis Jacobs

President of the European Law Institute