The Liability of Public Authorities in Comparative Perspective

In recent decades, the liability of public authorities has been one of the main areas of development in and at the edges of tort law in Europe, with major reforms implemented or considered at a national level, and a steady stream of major court decisions. During the same period, ‘Member State liability’ has also been recognised in the law of the EU, and the interplay of principles of national and EU law – and additionally the ‘just satisfaction’ jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights – evidently warrants close attention.

In this context, the aims of the present study are to contribute to the understanding of the law of extra-contractual liability as it applies to public authorities in the legal systems of Europe (and selected non-European jurisdictions), to facilitate its enhancement where necessary or desirable, and to consider the possibilities for harmonisation in the area – specifically, through the extension and adaptation of the Principles of European Tort Law to cover public authority liability.

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# Table of Contents

**Preface**

**List of Authors**

**Introduction - Ken Oliphant**

**Questionnaire**

## PART I. PUBLIC AUTHORITY LIABILITY OUTLINED

- **Austria** (Bernhard A Koch)
- **Belgium** (Isabelle Durant)
- **Czech Republic** (Luboš Tichý)
- **Denmark** (Vibe Ulfbeck)
- **England and Wales** (Ken Oliphant)
- **France** (Duncan Fairgrieve and François Lichere)
- **Germany** (Ulrich Magnus)
- **Greece** (Eugenia Dacoronia)
- **Israel** (Israel Gilead)
- **Italy** (Giovanni Comandé and Luca Nocco)
- **The Netherlands** (Anne Keirse)
- **Norway** (Bjarte Askeland)
- **Poland** (Ewa Baginska)
- **Portugal** (Maria José Reis Rangel de Mesquita)
- **South Africa** (Johann Neethling)
- **Spain** (Miquel Martín-Casals and Jordi Ribot)
- **Switzerland** (Pierre Widmer and Bénédict Winiger)
- **The United States** (Michael D Green and Jonathan Cardi)
- **European Union** (Piotr Machnikowski)

**The Liability of Public Authorities: an Economic Analysis** (Jef De Mot and Michael Faure)

## PART II. CASE STUDIES

1. **Case 1.** Negligent Safety Certification (Maladministration); **Case 2.** Wrongfully Cancelled Licence (Improper Administrative Decision); **Case 3.** Missing Warning (Improper Administrative Omission – Omission following Prior Creation of Risk); **Case 4.** Fireworks Store (Improper Administrative Omission – Pure Omission); **Case 5.** Unfounded Criminal Charges (Prosecutorial and Judicial Acts); **Case 6.** Unpasteurised Cheese (Possibly Improper Regulatory Act – Improper Regulatory Omission); **Case 7.** Police Cross-fire (Properly Conducted Administrative Activities)

## PART III. CONCLUSIONS

The Liability of Public Authorities in Comparative Perspective - Ken Oliphant

For the full table of contents please visit our website, www.intersentia.com