

Presentation

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This “special monographic issue” of the University of Catania Law Review (UCLR) is a first attempt to start an online periodical publication that, at least initially, is mainly intended as a forum for the presentation of the results of research carried out at the Department of Law of the University of Catania (UNICT). In so doing it tries to combine elements of the tradition with new approaches.

The link with the tradition is embedded in the roots of the Law Department of UNICT. The University of Catania was founded in 1434 and the Law Department is the oldest of the University. The Department comprises around 80 scholars (40 full professors, 30 associate professors, as well as a number of senior researchers, most of whom holding tenure track positions), and several post-doc junior scholars, as well as a number of PhD candidates. The areas of interest of the Department are very broad and include virtually all sectors of the law, as well as some disciplinary sectors of the area of economics.¹

At the Catania Law Department, in line with the dominant and widespread approach in the legal community, the research activities of scholars have been usually devoted to the objective of the publication of monographs as their main research product, while the variety of shorter contributions (Articles or Notes and Comments) has been normally seen as a completion of the academic profile of legal scholars.² At the same time, and in conjunction with the approach described above, the work of scholars in the legal arena has been predominantly carried out individually or, at best,

¹ The whole list can be read on line in our Three-Years Strategic Plan at page 5 (see https://www.lex.unict.it/sites/default/files/files/Piano_triennale_dipartimentale_2023-2025.pdf).

² The publications of the faculty members of the Department are systematically shown at <https://www.lex.unict.it/it/content/produzione-scientifica>, where they are posted as they become available.

within small research groups with homogenous cultural and scientific interests. More recently, however, there has been a move towards increased interdisciplinary research, on the one hand, and, on the other, there has been a pressing demand for Law Departments to become more active in orientating, at least in part, the research areas of their faculty members, developing departmental research projects. As part of this process individual scholars have been asked to concentrate efforts on some topical research aspects.

Against this background, some broad research axes have been selected. In particular, in 2018 and again in 2023 the Department of Law of the University of Catania Law was selected among the best 15 Law Departments in Italy within the framework of a Ministerial project called “Dipartimenti di Eccellenza”, which intends to support structural, teaching and research activities in those departments that were selected on the basis of their outstanding results in the ranking of the quality of their academic publications, as well as a specific departmental project to be implemented in the relevant quinquennium. Hence, in this regard, the first departmental project (2018-2022) of the Catania Law Department revolved around the topic “Industry 4.0”, dealing with the numerous challenges of the fourth industrial revolution, while the second departmental project (2023-2027), currently ongoing, hinges on “Law and Sustainability 360°” focusing on the multifaceted legal aspects of pursuing the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals and more specifically both the technological and green transitions.

This special monographic issue of the University of Catania Law Review – edited by Marisa Meli (professor of private law) and Antonio Las Casas (professor of private comparative law) to whom we are grateful for their work – brings together a series of papers focusing on financial incentives for the “green transition”.³ This volume was developed by a diversified interdisciplinary group mostly composed of faculty members who reflected on a specific research topic linked to the broader theme of our departmental research. The publication of these papers as “special

³ For more details on the content of this set of papers see *infra* the foreword by Meli and Las Casas.

monographic issue” is particularly appropriate as it combines interdisciplinary dialogue with the creation of a forum for dissemination, in English, of the result of departmental research, contributing by the same token to its increased internationalization.

Finally, let me conclude by thanking Antonio Guidara and Francesca Leotta respectively for the design and final copyediting of this inaugural issue.