

EDITORIAL

Celebrating forty years

In this issue of the *Common Market Law Review*, the Editors are pleased to present the contributions from the Conference held in Noordwijkerhout, the Netherlands, on 30 and 31 October 2003, to celebrate the 40th anniversary of this Review. The title of the conference was “40 years of legal developments in the European Communities and the European Union”. The Editors were gratified that so many past and present members of the Editorial and Advisory Boards could contribute papers, and attend the conference, together with a large number of recent authors.

The speakers were all long-standing contributors, and “friends” of the Review. They included the current members of the Editorial Board, past members of that Board, other members of the Advisory Board, as well as a number of regular contributors. These presentations will also appear in book form, but in first instance they are offered to all the subscribers.

In their published form, some papers no longer bear the marks of their genesis as conference speeches; while in other cases, the paper is still very much a speech, complete with amusing anecdotes and expressions of thanks for the organizers. The Board felt that such diversity was to be appreciated, not eradicated.

While the structure of the programme could be seen as bi-polar – the institutional developments on the one hand, and developments in substantive law on the other – the papers in their final versions reflect to an almost uncanny degree the triple agenda set out by Francis Jacobs in his keynote speech: the individual, the market and fundamental rights.

A number of contributions pick up, and examine in depth, a limited number of recent trends (Lenaerts; Louis; Winter); some contributions take a look at the broad lines of development over a longer period (Oliver and Roth; Prechal; Van Gerven; Slot). Some contributions give a very personal comment (Timmermans; Kapteyn). Several papers take particular notice of the very recent developments in the constitutional framework of the Union, as reflected by the 2003 Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, presented by the Convention on the Future of Europe (Dashwood; Cremona; Jacqué). The Editors are convinced that even within an overall theme relating

to the long-term developments in the legal order of the European Communities and Union, there is room for all these approaches.

The European enterprise is a dynamic, political experiment, which constantly poses legal questions of all varieties. In order to provide answers for the future, it is useful to take stock of the past, to try and understand what the evolution of the Communities has entailed so far.

The Editors hope that the contributions to the present issue provide material for understanding and dealing with the next important stages in the development of the legal order, which include the immediate incorporation of ten new Member States, and in some form or other a solution to the constitutional questions the Union is facing.