

Editors' foreword and acknowledgements

The idea for this book emerged in discussions we had within the Centre for Legislative Studies at Tilburg University, the Netherlands. For more than a decade, this research centre has focused its attention on the relationship between legislation and all kinds of law originating from sources other than the legislature. The Centre's main focus is particularly on the relationship between legislation and sources of law outside the sphere of government, i.e., non-state law, in the light of effectiveness and legitimacy. We wondered whether there were other research groups that researched this theme from a similarly broad perspective. The most important characteristic of the research by the Centre for Legislative Studies is its multidisciplinary approach, including various areas of positive law, legal sociology, legal theory and legal history. We came to the conclusion that a similar group did not exist, and there was not much relevant academic literature that takes a similarly multidisciplinary perspective, either. However, since various academics from around the world do study the same subject, we decided to invite these researchers to come to Tilburg University to further discuss the topic and to write a book on it together with several of the Centre's researchers.

We are very grateful to these authors for embarking on this project. The results of the project are important as well as topical. Many legislatures and regulators around the world struggle with the question of what should be done with non-state law. We believe that, with this book, we have made considerable headway in the ongoing discussions on this issue.

We are honoured that the Minister of Justice of the Netherlands, His Excellency Ernst Hirsch Ballin, devoted his precious time to reading the book and writing the preface. We are very grateful to Edward Elgar Publishers for believing in our project from the start and for their continuous interest and support. Also many thanks to those who contributed to the editing process, especially Ineke Sijtsma and Truus Verhoeven (both from Tilburg University).

The contributions are current as of 1 December 2007. We sincerely hope that this book will further enhance the relationship between non-state law and state regulation. The book shows that, in some instances, the legislature

should refrain from intertwining regulation and non-state law, yet it can also be concluded that there are cases in which such a relationship may lead to better regulation.

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Hanneke van Schooten
Jonathan Verschuuren
(Tilburg University, the Netherlands)

